ACROSS / A13

Vilma officially new governor of Batangas

BUSINESS / B1

Peso strengthens further to 46.31 to $1

SPORTS / A21

RP five bows to Qatar, ends up 4th in Fiba-Asia tilt

METRO / A17

Mark Jimenez says raps part of conspiracy

NEWS / A3

Comelec mulls calling failure of polls in 8 more towns

Political operators make a killing in Mindanao

YAN ANG MAGIC!

By Christian V. Esguerra

HOW CAN BASILAN'S newly created town with only 9,115 registered voters yield 26,939 votes?

And more suspiciously, the votes were only for six

POLITICAL/ A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Tuesday, May 22, 2007 ★★ 6 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 163 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

Pichay back at No. 15 after 4 hours at No. 10

By Jocelyn R. Uy, Leila B. Salaverria and Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

BIG SPENDER PROSPERO PICHAY OF THE Administration's Team Unity (TU) only had four glorious hours in the Magic 12 in the count of the Commission on Elections.

Landing in 10th place in the Comelec's "partial unofficial" tally as of 9:30 on Sunday night,

PICHAY/ A8

Fraud raps alarm Abalos

EL SHADDAI LEADER Bro. Mike Velarde blesses religious items, passports, employment applications and trinkets belonging to members who reach out to him during Sunday's prayer rally in Hong Kong. PHILIP TUBEZA

Bro. Mike tells GMA: Heed signs

By Philip C. Tubeza
Inquirer Correspondent

HONG KONG—THE SPIRITUAL ADviser of President Macapagal-Arroyo says she should read the message of the people in the senatorial elections and restore credibility to her government.

El Shaddai leader Bro. Mike Velarde has a second piece of advice for Ms Arroyo: Abandon Cha-cha (Charter change) for good.

Interviewed in Hong Kong after attending an El Shaddai prayer rally on Sunday, Velarde said the Arroyo administration should accept the results of the senatorial elections showing opposition candidates out front in the tallies, and focus on restoring "credibility and confidence" in the government.

He said the results showed that voters were looking for "alternative

BRO. MIKE/ A6

Team formed to investigate poll cheating in Maguindanao

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr. and Jocelyn R. Uy

COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. yesterday expressed alarm over reports that school teachers in Maguindanao were forced at gunpoint to fill up ballots with the names of administration senatorial candidates, and ordered the creation of a task force to investigate the alleged cheating.

"It is very alarming. The electoral system is being attacked here. This is not good," Abalos said.

He was reacting to an INQUIRER story the other day about how teachers in a Maguindanao school allegedly filled up ballots with the names of Team Unity candidates while being watched by armed men, and how school children were made to affix their thumbmarks on them.

FRAUD/ A6

ELEKSYON 2007

COMELEC 154 COCs from overseas absentee voters, 52 provinces & 6 cities As of 6:00 p.m. May 21, 2007			NAMFREL 103,421 out of 224,748 precincts As of 4:28 p.m. May 21, 2007		
1	LEGARDA	7,925,384	1	LEGARDA	7,119,321
2	ESCUDERO	7,762,618	2	ESCUDERO	7,004,587
3	VILLAR	6,474,000	3	LACSON	6,203,314
4	LACSON	6,437,230	4	VILLAR	5,834,591
5	PANGILINAN	6,337,098	5	PANGILINAN	5,651,094
6	AQUINO	6,146,363	6	AQUINO	5,608,632
7	ANGARA	5,457,981	7	ANGARA	5,001,930
8	ARROYO	5,106,570	8	HONASAN	4,697,571
9	CAYETANO, A.	4,850,920	9	ARROYO	4,566,788
10	ZUBIRI	4,843,179	10	CAYETANO, A	4,513,709
11	HONASAN	4,835,004	11	TRILLANES	4,387,193
12	RECTO	4,644,731	12	PIMENTEL	4,357,688
13	TRILLANES	4,578,278	13	ZUBIRI	4,196,828
14	PIMENTEL	4,563,872	14	RECTO	4,035,508
15	DEFENSOR	4,343,862	15	PICHAY	3,923,233
16	PICHAY	4,297,908	16	DEFENSOR	3,817,873
17	MONTANO	3,546,501	17	ROCO	3,355,920
18	ROCO	3,542,788	18	MONTANO	3,273,049
19	SOTTO	3,300,454	19	OSMENA	2,947,864
20	OSMENA	2,959,614	20	SOTTO	2,782,022
21	MAGSAYSAY	2,865,387	21	MAGSAYSAY	2,585,036
22	COSETENG	2,177,074	22	COSETENG	2,033,215
23	SINGSON	1,885,934	23	ORETA	1,685,919
24	ORETA	1,871,338	24	SINGSON	1,680,088
25	GOMEZ	1,136,250	25	GOMEZ	1,034,957
26	KIRAM	835,236	26	KIRAM	924,520
27	CHAVEZ	394,338	27	CHAVEZ	380,074
28	PAREDES	316,006	28	PAREDES	337,148
29	BAUTISTA	311,780	29	BAUTISTA	334,953
30	CAYETANO, J.	218,523	30	CAYETANO, J	235,078
31	SISON	153,104	31	SISON	188,594
32	LOZANO	128,302	32	LOZANO	182,193
33	WOOD	122,592	33	ESTRELLA	173,680
34	ESTRELLA	120,927	34	WOOD	156,321
35	CANTAL	53,143	35	ENCISO	80,551
36	ENCISO	42,458	36	ORPILLA	76,954
37	ORPILLA	42,046	37	CANTAL	70,669

Where's Jonas? Burgoses visit Army camp

By Fe Zamora

NORZAGARAY, BULACAN—ARMY OFFICIALS here yesterday insisted they did not have missing agriculturist Jonas Burgos—or anyone who resembled him—in their custody.

They also showed his mother, Edita Burgos, the impounded red Isuzu AUV whose license plate TAB 194 was spotted on the vehicle used in the kidnapping on April 28 of Jonas, son of the late publisher and press freedom fighter Jose "Joe" Burgos Jr.

The officials claimed the license plate had been stolen by informal settlers around the Army camp here. Apparently, it was not only the license plate that was stolen, as the vehicle had been stripped of its engine, seats, headlights, battery, radiator, air filter and other parts.

Maj. Miguel Cordero, the officer in charge of the 56th Infantry Battalion, said the theft must have occurred when the troops left the camp for a retraining early this year. The military impounded the vehicle last November

WHERE'S JONAS/ A9

Welcome HEADQUARTERS
56TH INFANTRY BATTALION
7TH INFANTRY DIVISION, PA
PHIL ARMY

EDITA BURGOS, flanked by son JL and former Sen. Bobby Tañada, visits an Army camp in Norzagaray, Bulacan, to look for her son Jonas Burgos who has been missing for 22 days. JOAN BONDOC

Surprise! Comelec outpaces Namfrel 'quick count' tally

By Norman Bordadora and Cathy Yamsuan

THE USUALLY SLOW COUNT BY THE COMmission on Elections became the "quick count" when its tally of votes exceeded that of the National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel).

As of yesterday afternoon, the Comelec count for leading senatorial candidate Loren Legarda had reached the 7-million mark.

Namfrel's count as of early morning yesterday put Legarda's votes at more than 6.3 million.

Batch 22, or the Namfrel update released at 8:40 a.m. yesterday, said the latest figures came from 94,206 precincts, or about 42 percent of all precincts nationwide.

The faster-than-usual Comelec count prompted former Comelec Chair Christian Monsod to suggest that Namfrel's tally be called a "parallel count" instead of a "citizens' quick count."

SURPRISE!/ A8

UK officer plays it straight, tells squad he's gay

LONDON—THE OFFICER, A SQUADRON leader in the Royal Air Force, felt he had no choice. So he stood up in front of his squad of 30 to 40 people.

"I said, 'Right, I've got something to tell you,'" he said. "'I believe that for us to be able to work closely together and have faith in each other, we have to be honest and open and frank. And it has to be a two-way process, and it starts with me baring my soul. You may have heard some rumors and, yes, I have a long-term partner who is a he, not a she.'"

Far from causing problems, the officer found that coming out to his troops actually increased the unit's strength and cohesion.

He had felt uneasy keeping the secret "that their boss was a poof," as the officer put it, from people he worked so closely with.

UK OFFICER/ A7

Reelected Ilocos mayor shot dead

THE WIFE of Bacarra town Mayor Philip Velasco weeps over her husband's body. Velasco was gunned down while attending a beauty pageant. AFP

By Cristina Arzadon
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BACARRA, ILOCOS NORTE—REelected Mayor Philip Velasco had remarked that the May 14 elections were the most peaceful in this town. A gunman proved him wrong Sunday night, slipping behind him and killing him and Councilor Marcelo Andaya.

The attacker, who was not identified, was killed moments later by security men of the municipal officials who were attending the Bacarra farmers' festival in the town auditorium.

Velasco was to introduce the guest of honor, Ilocos Norte Gov. Ferdinand Marcos Jr., who did not show up after he was informed of the killings.

Reelected Vice Mayor Nicomedes de la Cruz, now the acting mayor, yesterday led in the filing of a resolu-

REELECTED/ A7

EZ2 FOUR DIGIT
19 11 | 7 4 3 4
Mid-Day SUERTRES Evening
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(All in exact order)
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Second FrontPage

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Luzon and Eastern sections of Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

COMPILED BY: LAW DE GUZMAN, INQUIRER RESEARCH/05/21/07 SOURCE: PAGASA

GMA seeks Chinoys' help with oppo

By Michael Lim Ubac

THIS EARLY, PRESIDENT MACApagal-Arroyo appears concerned about the outlook of the reform agenda of her administration amid the possibility of an opposition majority in the Senate.

At a luncheon she tendered in Malacañang in honor of the new officers of the influential Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry Inc. (FFCCCII), the President tried to solicit the aid of the Chinese community in taming the Senate, by asking the traders to persuade the incoming senators whom they backed to support her fiscal policies and put an end to political bickering.

"We made an appeal to the federation to call on all our elected officials [and tell that] that it's time to sit down and focus on the economy," said Trade secretary Peter Favila, shortly after emerging from Malacañang's Rizal Hall.

The 143 officers of the organization, headed by chair emeritus Lucio C. Tan and president John K. Tan, trooped to the Palace for their oath-taking ceremony.

The biggest group of local businessmen of Chinese descent vowed to pursue its pro-poor social welfare projects in support of government programs.

In his speech, Tan thanked Ms Arroyo for allowing them to take their oath "at the very seat of government."

Like something of a quid pro quo for the privilege, the federation turned over a check in the amount of P1.25 million for the purchase and assembly of an additional 50 rolling stores for the administration's "Tindahan Natin (Our Store)" project.

Favila told reporters that he sounded the call for support to the "various leaders of the Chinese community" with the President's backing.

"I told them: 'Let's not keep things from each other. We all know that in their individual capacity, politicians approached you, and you in turn helped them,'" Favila said.

"It's like fathers telling their children: 'I've given you your allowance because I wanted you to do these things. Now if you don't do them, you won't have an allowance.'"

Favila added that in return, the campaign donors could "expect them (politicians) to do good."

"Maybe they would listen to them. If I'm a businessman who helped a politician, I will tell him, 'I helped you because I believe you will do what is right not only for my business but for the country. If you don't do the right thing, next time around maybe I will not give you the support that you would ask for," Favila said.

Favila said the business leaders played a critical role in preserving the economic gains of, and even in unifying, the nation.

He said: "They could say, 'We don't need (politicking) now. The elections are over. The people have spoken and we should accept the results. Let's get our act together for our country's future.'"

Asked what the FFCCCII's response was, Favila said it was "very, very positive."

RABID FAN. President Macapagal-Arroyo visits Barangay 598 in Old Sta. Mesa, Manila, to meet with barangay officials on Monday, one day before leaving for Japan. As she was about to leave, a resident reached out to the President, which delighted her but startled her guards.

LYN RILLON

GMA to assure Japanese on JPEPA

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO will reassure Japanese investors that a landmark bilateral free trade deal will still be ratified by a Senate now likely to be dominated by her political foes, according to Trade Secretary Peter Favila.

Favila disclosed that the President and her economic advisers were to fly to Japan today for a three-day visit, during which they would brief businessmen there on the progress of the Japan-Philippine Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA).

He said Japanese investors were waiting for the JPEPA's ratification, which had been held up by the Senate after environmentalists alleged that it would allow Tokyo to ship hazardous waste to Manila.

Japan has denied the allegation.

Favila said that some 200 Japanese investors were waiting for its final ratification before relocating here.

"We are keeping our fingers crossed that once the new Congress comes into effect, the Senate would find time to work on this measure," Favila said.

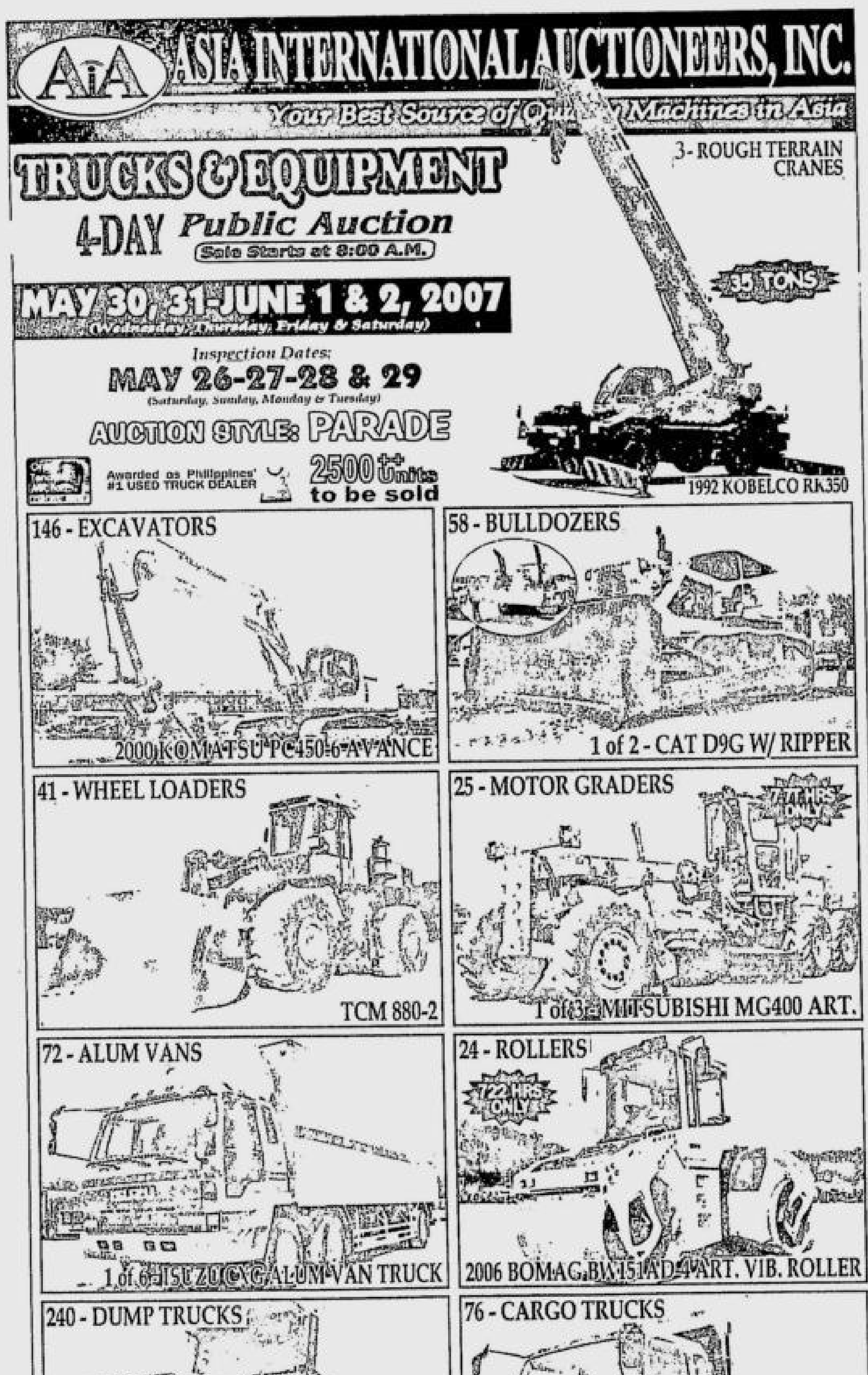
"We're doing everything to get this act ratified," he said, while stressing that due to the nature of the country's political system, "it's in the hands of the Senate."

The administration appears set to lose control of the Senate, with incomplete results of the May 14 polls indicating that its candidates were losing to opposition politicians.

The trade deal was signed by Ms Arroyo and then Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi on the sidelines of an Asia-Europe summit in Helsinki in September.

Tokyo says the deal was a first because it included provisions on the movement of labor while removing tariffs on more than 90 percent of goods traded between the two countries.

The Philippine government is expecting major investment pledges during the trip as well as the approval of a loan package from Tokyo. *AFP*



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Padaca: My fears of poll manipulation coming true

ILAGAN, ISABELA—REELECTIONist Gov. Grace Padaca on Monday said her greatest fear the election results would be manipulated in the province were coming true after the provincial board of canvassers (PBOC) insisted on taking the issue of her proclamation to the Commission on Elections in Manila.

In a statement, Padaca deplored how the board, due to objections by her rival's lawyers, ruled to suspend the proclamation of winning candidates in the gubernatorial and vice gubernatorial races despite the completion of the canvass.

"Since the beginning, we already knew of (the Dy camp's) plan to raise all sorts of objections to the results in order to derail our proclamation so that the case would be brought to Manila," she said.

"Once it's there and the Comelec commissioners begin handling the case, they own us," Padaca said.

Former Gov. Benjamin Dy asked the Comelec in Manila to declare a failure of elections in nine towns in Isabela due to alleged "*dagdag-bawas*" (vote-shaving and -padding), manipulation of votes and other election irregularities allegedly committed by his rivals.

Johnny Abraham Asuncion, acting provincial election supervisor and PBOC chair, told the lawyers of the opposing parties that they would have to wait for the decision of the Comelec central office on the motion of Dy to declare a failure of elections in the nine towns.

As of May 21, the final Comelec tally showed Padaca with 229,947 votes against Dy's 217,726 for a margin of 12,221 votes. It included the temporarily canvassed results from the 109 contested precincts.

Dy asked Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos to declare a failure of elections in Cabagan, Tumauini, Echague, Jones, San Agustin, Cordon, Delfin Albano, Santa Maria and Roxas towns, and to hold special elections there.

Padaca led Dy in the nine towns.

"How come the elections in these towns should be considered a failure when surely the elections were held, the votes were cast and canvassed and the winning candidates were proclaimed?" Padaca said.

She called on Abalos, the commissioner in charge for Cagayan Valley, to "ensure that the will of the people of Isabela be respected and upheld."

"Let me and the people of Isabela not go through again what we had experienced in the 2004 elections. For once and at once, please erase our fears regarding the Comelec," she said.

The Comelec proclaimed reelected Rep. Rodolfo Albano III (first district), Rep. Edwin Uy (second district) and Rep. Faustino Dy III (third district).

Former Rep. Giorgidi Aggabao is leading Rep. Anthony Miranda in the fourth district, but election returns in Santiago City have yet to be canvassed.

In Kalinga, gubernatorial candidate Floydelia Diasen, who substituted for her slain husband, Vice Gov. Rommel Diasen, accused the Tulgao tribe members allied with Rep. Laurence Wacnang of derailing her proclamation.

Diasen said the canvassing site at the provincial capitol in Barangay Bulanao in Tabuk town had been under a virtual "Tulgao tribe control, not under Comelec control" as about 100 tribe supporters of Wacnang reportedly had massed up there.

She said her lawyers had asked for her proclamation on May 20 but Wacnang's lawyers opposed it, saying that election returns from upper towns had yet to be canvassed.

In the latest National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections quick count, Diasen got 52,897 votes while Wacnang had 18,715.

Only the election returns in Tinglayan have been left uncanvassed by Namfrel. Tinglayan has 9,491 registered voters.

Ricardo Lampac, acting Kalinga election supervisor, asked for police security on May 19, claiming a threat to his life.

He decided to temporarily stay at the police quarters instead of a private hotel apparently for security reasons.

In Apayao, reelectionist Gov. Elias Bulut Sr., 68, and his son, reelectionist Rep. Elias Bulut Jr., 37, won, according to Thomas Uyam, acting provincial election supervisor.

The Buluts have been ruling the province for the past 36 years, records showed.

Bulut Sr. was mayor of Calanasan, Kalinga-Apayao (now Apayao) from 1971 to 1992 and representative of Kalinga-Apayao from 1992 to 1995 and of Apayao (when it was separated from Kalinga) from 1995 to 2001. He has been the Apayao governor since 2001.

His son, Elias Jr., was mayor of Calanasan, Apayao, from 1998 to 2001. He also served as councilor in 1992 and vice mayor from 1993 to 1995.

In Cagayan, gubernatorial candidate Alvaro Antonio was leading reelectionist Gov. Edgar Lara, based on election results from 21 towns canvassed by the PBOC.

The results showed Antonio had 117,182 votes while Lara had 90,988.

Villamor Visaya Jr., Melvin Gascon and Estanislao Caldez, Inquirer Northern Luzon

Party-list groups find 'smoking gun' in vote count

By Jeannette I. Andrade

SEVERAL PARTY-LIST GROUPS yesterday said they had found the "smoking gun" that would prove electoral fraud was committed in the tallying of votes in the party-list elections.

Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo, Bayan Muna legal counsel Neri Colmenares, Anakpawis Rep. Rafael Mariano and representatives from Gabriela, Suara Bangsamoro and Kabataan have charged the chair of the board of canvassers (BOC) in Caloocan City, Juliet Villar, with padding the votes of the government-linked Kasangga party-list group.

They said that in at least 11 precincts in the city, they found evidence of vote-padding in favor of Kasangga, whose nominees include Marilou Arroyo, the sister of First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo.

"The Comelec has been looking for a smoking gun. *Heto na yong smoking gun* (Here is the smoking gun)," Mariano said.

They pointed to the large discrepancy between the figures on the election returns (ERs) and on the statements of votes (SOV).

In one precinct, they said a single vote on the ER translated to 81 votes on the SOV while in other precincts, zero votes became 50, 70, 72 and 98 votes on the SOV.

It was Kabataan poll watcher Daniel Cleofas Jr. who discovered the discrepancies.

"*Nilalagyan lang ng isa pang digit iyong mga* figures *para dumami o magkaroon ng boto* (They added another digit to increase the votes)," Ocampo said.

When the party-list groups confronted Villar with their findings, she offered to remedy the situation by erasing the erroneous entries with a "liquid eraser."

This, Colmenares said, was not the proper procedure so they protested the move.

The proper way, he explained, was to encircle the wrong entry, write the correction on top of it and initial the correction to validate the election document.

Colmenares said Villar violated Comelec Resolution 7859, specifically the provision prohibiting "electoral sabotage," defined as the tampering and changing of votes. This is punishable with life imprisonment.

Mariano said that vote-padding in the party-list polls would work against all party-list aspirants because it increases the total party-list votes and, consequently, the minimum number of votes that would make up the two-percent requirement for an aspirant to win a seat in the House of Representatives.

Ocampo said several incidents of fraud had been thwarted against Bayan Muna and Gabriela, particularly in Batangas and Cotabato, where thousands of votes were shaved from their tallies. But, he said, these attempts were foiled and corrected.

The party-list groups said they would file charges against Villar today.

Comelec mulls over failure of elections in 8 more towns

By Jerome Aning

THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS IS CONsidering declaring a failure of elections in at least 160 precincts covering about 40,000 registered voters—in eight more municipalities in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

In Resolution No. 8060, the Comelec said it would conduct a two-day public hearing to determine whether or not to hold new elections in precincts in several barangays of Picong, Lanao del Sur; Indanan, Sulu; Tandubas, Tawi-Tawi; Barira and Kabuntalan, both in Shariff Kabunsuan; and Akbar, Tuburan and Sumisip, all in Basilan.

The commissioners assigned Executive Director Pio Jose Joson to notify all local election officials, as well as candidates and political parties about the hearing.

Based on Comelec records cited by the poll watchdog Halalang Marangal, the 160 precincts have about 40,000 registered voters, mostly in Indanan, Sumisip, Barira and Picong.

ARMM commissioner in charge Rene Sarmiento recommended the declaration of a failure of elections in memoranda dated May 16, 17 and 18 to the Comelec en banc.

Sarmiento cited the lack of, the snatching and destruction of election paraphernalia as major reasons polls were not held in most of the areas.

On Thursday, the Comelec decided that special elections would be held on May 26 in 15 towns of Lanao del Sur: Tubaran, Madalum, Lumbanayague, Sultan Dumalondong, Marugong, Pualas, Lumbatan and Lumbacaunayan, Butig, Kapai, Binidayan, Kapatagan, Bayang, Lumba Bayabao and Masiu. There are some 100,000 registered voters in these areas.

In Marawi City, the National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) has asked the Comelec to focus on three things in the run-up to this Saturday's special elections.

"We would like for the Comelec to provide sufficient security, drive away flying voters, and to fast-track the canvassing of votes in the towns which had their elections on May 14," said Hadji Abdullah Dalidig, chair of Namfrel-Lanao del Sur.

Elections were suspended in these areas after the boards of election inspectors (BEIs) refused to serve after receiving threats.

Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos. said that with an estimated 100,000 voters failing to vote, the results from these areas could be significant for senatorial candidates treading the 11th to 14th positions.

Dalidig said that the most important concern was security because it "is the basic condition that allows people to freely express their sentiments through the ballot."

Rey Sumalipao, Comelec director for ARMM, said he had asked for the deployment of more Army troops to the Lanao del Sur towns where special elections would be held.

In Kapai town, mayoral candidate Badar Jalal Mangarun asked the Comelec to beef up the security force stationed in the town "to prevent a repeat of our May 14 experience."

On Election Day, gunshots and mortar fire forced BEIs to abandon their duties, forcing the Comelec to suspend the balloting in Kapai. *With a report from Ryan Rosauro, Inquirer Mindanao*

Escudero addresses Senate employees

LEADING SENATOrial candidate Francis Escudero yesterday addressed the staff of the Senate during their weekly flag-raising ceremony, asking them to guide him on the workings of the chamber, even though he played coy about his chances of winning a Senate seat.

Asked after the rites if he was confident of making it to Magic 12 in the Senate race, Escudero said the counting was far from over.

"If something untoward happens and I don't quite make it, at least I was able to speak in the Senate, even if only in the parking lot," he said.

Escudero and fellow Genuine Opposition candidate Loren Legarda have been see-sawing between the top two slots in the vote counts being conducted by the Commission on Elections and the National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections.

A member of Escudero's campaign staff told the INQUIRER the candidate was invited by the Senate employees to address them during the flag rites.

"I wish and I pray for your guidance. Perhaps there have been other senators who told you this; let me ask you as well," Escudero told the employees.

He told them the Senate would remain independent with the election of majority of the GO candidates a virtual certainty.

He said the independence of the legislative body was important to a functioning democratic form of government. *Norman Bordadora*

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Espinosa files disqualification case against rival

By Michael Lim Ubac

MALOLI ESPINOSA, THE DEFEATED congressional candidate in the second district of Masbate, has filed a disqualification case against her rival, three-term governor Antonio Kho.

"Our legal counsel has filed a motion to suspend the effect of the proclamation due to a strong disqualification case against Kho," she said.

She charged that Kho did not comply with the residency requirement in the second district since his house was located in the third district of Masbate.

Newly proclaimed Gov. Olga Kho, however, pointed out that a similar petition to disqualify her and her husband had been junked by the Commission on Elections prior to the polls.

The governor said they had already submitted adequate proof, including lease contracts, of their transfer of residence.

Kho defeated Espinosa, the daughter of slain Rep. Moises Espinosa, by over 13,000 votes in the district controlled by the Espinosa clan for over half a century. Kho's wife Olga also won over Rep. Emilio Espinosa Jr. for the gubernatorial post. They were declared the winners by the Commission of Elections on Friday.

The Khos, who entered Masbate politics barely a decade ago, wiped out one of the longest-reigning political dynasties in the country.

Espinosa admitted that being her father's daughter was her biggest political baggage.

Some people, she said, wanted her to pay for the sins of her forebears.

"I'm the one being asked to answer (for the sins of the Espinosa clan)," said Espinosa, who quit her job as vice president for corporate affairs and public relations of ABS-CBN to run in the gold-rich province long known as the virtual fiefdom of the Espinosas.

The once-mighty clan, having been in power for as long as Masbateños can remember, has had its share of murder and corruption charges during its long watch.

"That's the negative part that I had to face. *Kasalanan ko ba* (Is it my fault)?" she said in an interview late Sunday.

During her campaign sorties she even told voters that she was not standing before them as an Espinosa.

She insisted that the massive defeat experienced by the Espinosa clan in the hands of the camp of outgoing Gov. Antonio Kho was not the real issue in Masbate's recent polls.

"It's not whether the Espinosas are in power or not. The question should be, 'did the poll results reflect the real voice of the Masbatenos?'" Espinosa said.

"I don't want to see it as a family against family battle ... How many family members died already because of (politics)?"

Her father was shot dead on the tarmac of Masbate's airport in 1989. In 1995, her uncle former Rep. Tito Espinosa was also assassinated. Her brother, Moises Jr., who became mayor of the capital of Masbate, was killed in 2001, less than two months after he assumed office.

"I did not represent myself as an Espinosa but as one of the Masbateños who would really want to serve, to be one of those who would like to start new politics in the community," she said.

Flying V, other firms raise fuel prices

By Abigail L. Ho

INDEPENDENT OIL FIRM FLYING V jacked up the prices of its gasoline products by P1 a liter, and of its diesel and kerosene by 50 centavos a liter at 12:01 a.m. today.

Its competitors had implemented their own price increases over the weekend.

Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. hiked prices at 12:01 a.m. Saturday, followed by Petron Corp. and Chevron Philippines Inc. at 6 a.m. the same day.

Total (Philippines) Corp. and Eastern Petroleum Corp. raised their prices by the same levels at 12:01 a.m. Sunday.

Prior to this price change, local oil firms had not increased their pump prices for an entire month.

The price hike was attributed to higher international market prices, particularly of gasoline.

According to data from the Department of Energy, the regional benchmark Dubai crude reached an average of $63.71 a barrel in the May 1-17 period, almost reaching the level of the high April average of $63.97 a barrel.

The price of unleaded gasoline based on the Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS) benchmark for refined petroleum products surged to an average of $88.16 a barrel in the first 17 days of the month, from only $83.64 a barrel in April.

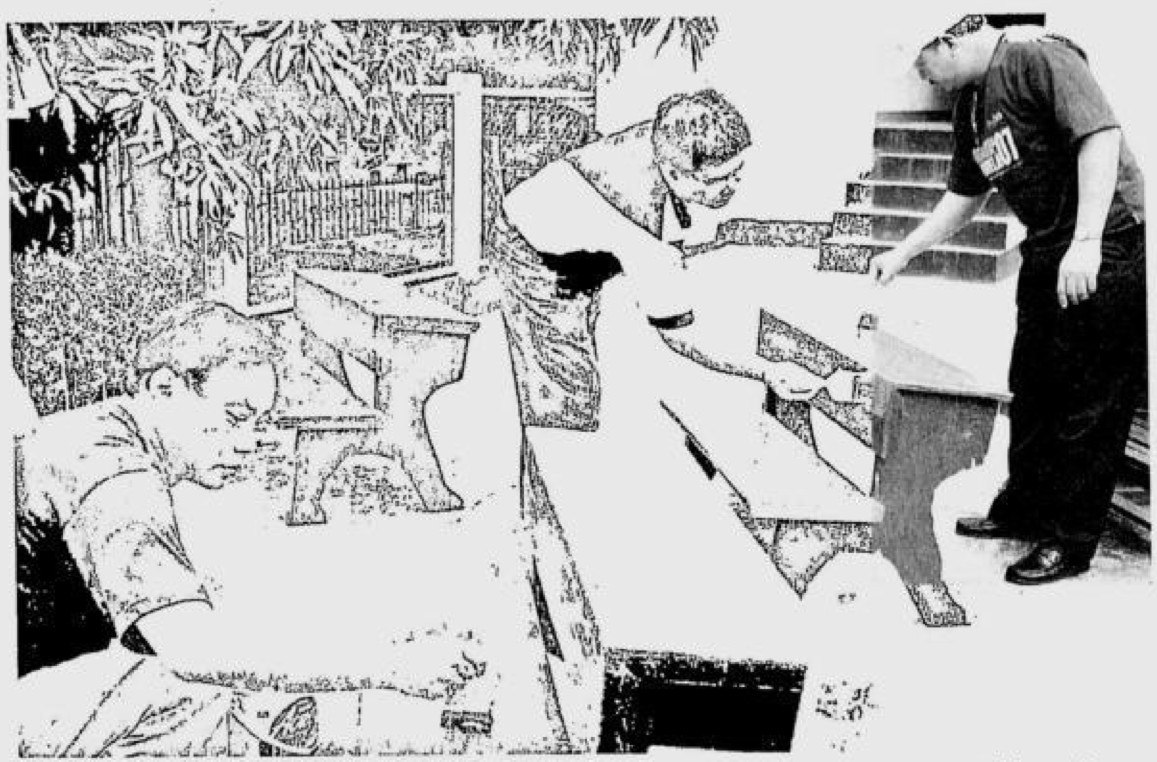
MOPS-based diesel inched up to an average price of $82.84 a barrel as of May 17, from the April average of $82.11 a barrel.

World gasoline prices surged these past weeks due mainly to the start of the summer driving season in the United States.

The fuel price hike was the sixth for gasoline for a total of P3.50 a liter, and the fifth for both diesel and kerosene for a total of P2.50 a liter.

Since the start of the year, pump prices of gasoline, diesel and kerosene had been reduced by a total of P1.80 a liter.

The latest price hike brings premium unleaded gasoline prices to between P37.23 and P40.20 a liter, diesel prices to between P31.87 and P35.15 a liter, and kerosene prices to P35.65 and P39.70 a liter.



EDUCATION Secretary Jesli A. Lapus (left) and parent and teacher volunteers spruce up tables and chairs with a fresh coat of paint at Eulogio Rodriguez Elementary School in Mandaluyong City on Monday during the formal launch of the week-long Brigada Eskwela program. RODEL ROTONI

Teachers, parents begin cleanup of public schools

By Jerry E. Esplanada

THE SPIRIT OF BAYANIHAN IS very much alive.

This was evident during yesterday's formal launch of the week-long Brigada Eskwela program of the Department of Education in two Metro Manila public schools, observed DepEd Secretary Jesli A. Lapus.

Lapus joined parents and teachers in cleaning classrooms and repairing the facilities at Eulogio Rodriguez and Villamor Air Base elementary schools in Mandaluyong City and Pasay City, respectively.

Military personnel as well as representatives of local government units, business and nongovernment organizations also took part in the cleanup at both schools.

DepEd divisions covering some 35,000 public elementary and secondary schools nationwide will do their share during the observance of National Schools Maintenance Week, which runs from May 21 to 26 according to Lapus.

The DepEd has targeted between P2.5-billion and P3-billion worth of material donations and man-hours for this year's program.

Last year, more than 29,000 public schools participated in the program, which netted P2.03 billion in donations and various services.

Paint walls, repair roofs

"Donations are not limited to construction materials but services as well. Volunteers can paint walls, cement footpaths, repair faulty plumbing, replace leaking roofs and even tend the school garden," Lapus told the INQUIRER.

Oplan Balik Eskwela or OBE "is the government's effort to ensure the orderly conduct of the opening of the 2007-2008 school year," said Ramon Bacani, DepEd undersecretary for regional operations.

The program also "seeks to streamline the efforts of different government agencies to address common problems associated with the opening of classes."

Monitor prices

The OBE Interagency Convergence Task Force groups include the departments of health, trade and industry, interior and local government, defense, public works and highways, and transportation and communications, Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, Philippine National Police, and the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa).

Earlier in a news conference, DTI Assistant Secretary Ma. Theresa Pelayo said the trade department would closely monitor and ensure the stability of the prices of school supplies.

PNP Senior Supt. Jose Gentiles said the police had strengthened their presence near public and private schools.

Heavy rains in July

Pagasa head Dr. Prisco Nilo said the country would likely experience fair weather when classes open early next month.

But there would be heavy rains around July, Nilo said.

In a statement, Lapus called "everyone to action in this year's Brigada Eskwela. This is an opportunity for us to show our children our concern for their education and welfare."

"We look forward to greater participation this year. As we all clean and repair our schools, let us remember that the true value of Brigada Eskwela is in how well we can teach our children the essence of cooperation and community involvement," he said.

Petron ordered to pay BIR ₱600M

By Michelle V. Remo

PETRON CORP. LOST ITS SECOND tax credit case against the Bureau of Internal Revenue, with the Court of Tax Appeals (CTA) ordering the oil giant to pay P600.77 million in excise taxes to the BIR.

The case involved Petron's use of tax credit certificates (TCCs) to pay for its excise tax liabilities with the BIR from 1995 to 1998. The TCCs, however, were later canceled after an audit by the Department of Finance revealed that these were fraudulently secured.

The BIR, an attached agency of the DOF, therefore, said the TCCs were invalid payments for the said tax liabilities. The BIR asked Petron to pay the deficient taxes, but the oil firm protested and brought the matter to the CTA for resolution.

Petron said it should not be held liable because it did not know that the TCCs were fraudulently secured. The oil firm added that the BIR, in the first place, accepted the TCCs as payments for the taxes.

But in the CTA's decision, penned by Associate Justice Erlinda Uy, the court said Petron was liable to pay the BIR following the discovery that the TCCs had been secured fraudulently and, therefore, did not have any value.

"The findings of the DOF (Department of Finance) that the TCCs do not have monetary value is undisputed," the CTA said in the decision.

"When the petitioner (Petron Corp.) utilized the TCCs for its payment of excise taxes at the time when the post-audit was not yet conducted nor finalized, it did so at its own risk," the CTA added.

The TCC is an instrument issued by the government to firms that have claims for tax or duty refunds. Because processing of refunds takes time, the government allows holders to sell their TCCs to immediately convert these instruments into cash. Buyers of TCCs are allowed to use these instruments to pay for their tax obligations.

Corrections

IN THE MAY 20 ISSUE, the wrong photo accompanied a Sunday Biz article on Page B2—"Filipino youth shine with sun power." The photo used was that of the Toyota Solar Power System in Sta. Rosa, Laguna—not of Sunpower Philippines Manufacturing, Ltd.

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IN THE MAY 21 ISSUE, a Business Monday story on Page B2—"Math wiz also has a green thumb"—misspelled the surname of a world-famous artist. The artist's surname is Picasso—not Picazzo.

***

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Tuesday, May 22, 2007
7th Week of Easter

1st Reading: Acts 20:17-27
Gospel: John 17:1-11

Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; give glory to your Son, that the Son may give glory to you. You have given him power over all mortals, and you want him to bring eternal life to all you have entrusted to him. For this is eternal life: to know you, the only true God, and the One you sent, Jesus Christ.

"I have glorified you on earth and finished the work that you gave me to do. Now, Father, give me in your presence the same Glory I had with you before the world began.

"I have made your name known to those you gave me from the world. They were yours and you gave them to me, and they kept your word. And now they know that all you have given me comes indeed from you. I have given them the teaching I received from you, and they received it and know in truth that I came from you; and they believe that you have sent me.

"I pray for them; I do not pray for the world but for those who belong to you and whom you have given to me—indeed all I have is yours and all you have is mine—and now they are my glory. I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world whereas I am going to you. Holy Father, keep them in your Name (that you have given me,) so that they may be one, just as we are."

Commentary

Paul speaks to the elders and tells them that he always spoke the truth to them for their own good and insisted on repentance and faith. Now he is going to Jerusalem, compelled by the Spirit, though he has been warned that there will be chains and hardships. He declares that he wants to bear witness to the gospel and that he is leaving and will not see them again. He boasts of what he has done and never shrunk from announcing the good news. (Paul is not known to be a humble man).

Jesus prays to the Father for his hour to be glorified has come and he will glorify his Father. He has been faithful and done his work for the Father on earth, making his name known and giving all that he has been given by the Father to us. We have been entrusted with this message of God and know that it is the truth. We are God's, and Jesus prays that we will be in the world and Jesus will be in us. What an unbelievable life we have!

Bulusan alert raised; tillers see bleak times

By Bobby Q. Labalan
Inquirer Southern Luzon

JUBAN, SORSOGON—AN UNCERTAIN future faces residents of Barangay Puting Sapa here after the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) raised to 2 the alert level over Mt. Bulusan volcano effective at noon yesterday and warned of possible eruptions in the coming days.

The heightened alert was brought about by the steady increase in volcanic earthquakes the past five days, resident volcanologist Bella Tubianosa told the INQUIRER.

Tubianosa said the increase was significant, up to 673 earthquakes in five days with 223 recorded in just one day.

Normally, only five earthquakes are recorded per day, she said.

Sulfur emissions down

Phivolcs also noted a decrease in sulfur dioxide emissions to between 161 and 315 tons per day, much lower than the baseline value of 500 tons per day.

"The decrease in sulfur dioxide emissions could mean that something is blocking the emissions," she said.

Tubianosa said these signs, coupled with an inflation along the northeast flank of the volcano measuring four millimeters discovered during a ground deformation survey on April 17, were indications of increasing volcanic unrest.

Phivolcs has issued warnings and alerted all disaster councils in the municipalities concerned.

Plans in place

Noel Pura, action officer of the Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council, said the PDCC had conferred with the municipal disaster councils and reviewed contingency plans.

"Everything and everyone is ready in case the big bang comes," he told the INQUIRER by mobile phone during a meeting with officials of the Office of Civil Defense in Legazpi City on Monday.

This early, vegetable farmers and local residents appealed to the government for help as recent ash falls had devastated their farms, their only source of livelihood.

Ely Estrania, 68, of Barangay Puting Sapa, said the ash explosion on May 12 had severely damaged farms, most of which were ready for harvest.

Shift to vegetables

Estrania said that since two supertyphoons lashed their coconut farms last year, the farmers who used to rely on copra shifted to vegetable-farming.

At least 90 percent of the 150 households in the village now derive their income from raising vegetables.

But with sulfuric ash covering their farms, they have nothing to sell and are relying on menial jobs like helping other farmers to harvest rice for which they are paid P150 every other day, Estrania said.

"Before the ash fall devastated our farms we earned as much as P300 to P500 from which we paid for our daily needs," he said.

Catalina Pesino, 72, another vegetable farmer, said they were at a loss where to get fresh capital to rehabilitate their farms.

"I am praying the volcano would keep silent," she said.

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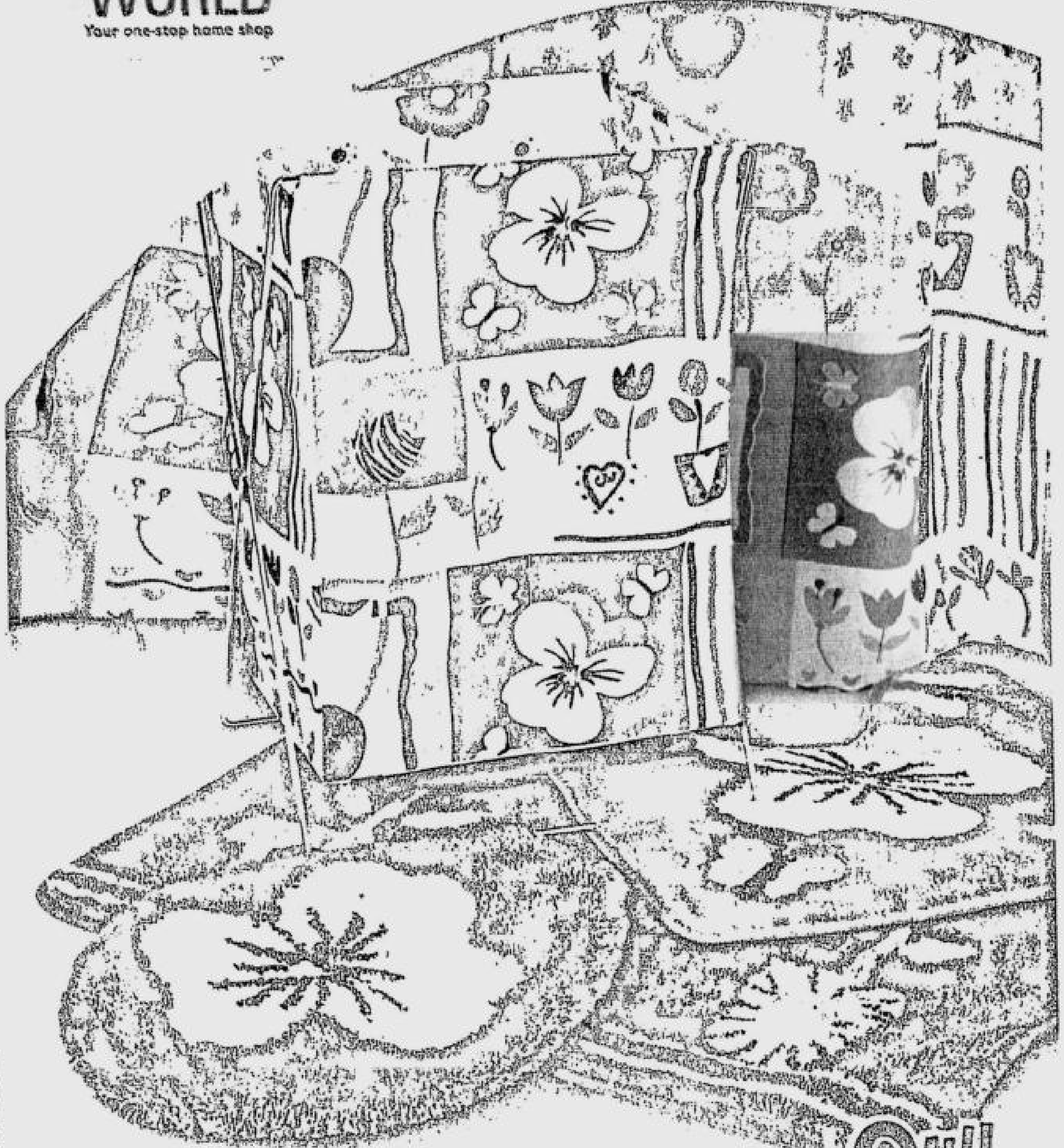

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Fraud raps alarm Abalos

From page A1

Abalos challenged the accusers to present evidence, saying the Comelec would protect them.

Lente, the legal arm of the watchdog Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV), said it had obtained confessions from a female public school teacher in Maguindanao who said that she and other teachers prepared the ballots in the middle of the night, hours before polling precincts were supposed to open.

Lente officials said the teacher did not want to be identified for fear of her safety.

The report coincided with accusations by the National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections that Comelec officials in Maguindanao had refused to provide Namfrel volunteers with copies of provincial election returns, in defiance of orders from the Comelec head office.

"The credibility of the commission has been put at stake. That's why we are conducting an investigation," Abalos said.

BENJAMIN S. ABALOS, SR.

ABALOS: The electoral system is being attacked. This is not good.

Looking for the truth

Commissioner Rene Sarmiento, who is in charge of Maguindanao, said he would lead an investigation right after the special elections scheduled for Saturday in Lanao del Sur, where goons reportedly prevented elections from being held on schedule on May 14.

After the special polls in Lanao del Sur, "we will conduct an investigation in Maguindanao," Sarmiento said.

He said he would invite regional and provincial election supervisors "to shed light on these allegations."

"We just want to show that the commission is resolved to conclude the investigation, to ferret out the truth," Sarmiento said.

Abalos called on Lente and PPCRV to reveal the sources of the allegations on the Maguindanao fraud so the poll body could determine if such an incident really took place.

"This is very serious because, as I said, it goes to the very essence of voting, of elections," he said.

Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur are among the provinces in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) mentioned in the "Hello Garci" tapes where votes were allegedly rigged to favor President Macapagal-Arroyo during the 2004 presidential election.

The tapes supposedly dealt with phone conversations between Ms Arroyo and former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano on the manipulation of votes. Ms Arroyo and Garcillano denied they cheated.

Asked whether the National Board of Canvassers would defer the canvassing of votes from Maguindanao, Abalos said the board could not totally disregard the result of the elections in the province on a mere allegation by someone who hides "under a cloak of immunity."

"Let's be realistic about this," he said.

Failure of elections

Since the Maguindanao probe will start only after the Lanao del Sur special elections, when the canvassing might already be nearing completion, the allegations of fraud would not hamper the proclamations of senatorial winners, Abalos said.

"Mere allegations, unless supported by evidence, cannot be a ground to suspend proclamation," Abalos also said.

Sen. Franklin Drilon urged the Comelec to declare a failure of elections in Maguindanao and exclude the province from the official vote tallies in view of what he claimed was a blatant attempt by the administration to rig Maguindanao's 300,000-plus votes.

Drilon decried what he said were arbitrary moves by the Comelec to declare a failure of elections in areas that did not favor administration candidates, while upholding the results in places where the votes had been manipulated to favor the administration.

"If you look at the election returns and the certificate of canvass, the statement of votes from the Maguindanao area and given what is reported about the teacher admitting that they filled up election returns, this should be sufficient for the Comelec to nullify the election in Maguindanao," Drilon said in a press conference.

He said the Comelec, specifically Commissioner Sarmiento, should "stop acting like the Philippine National Police who will always tell the public, 'you file a complaint against our erring policemen.'"

"He should stop saying that complaints should be filed before they investigate because the Comelec can motu propio investigate these complaints. The Comelec should exclude the questionable returns from the province of Maguindanao from its official canvass," Drilon said.

Namfrel claim disputed

Drilon said the Comelec should also look at declaring a failure of elections in Lanao, Tawi-Tawi, Sultan Kudarat and Sulu.

Drilon said: "The Liberal Party is outraged over the reported massive and blatant Election Day and canvassing irregularities, especially in the areas alleged to be bailiwicks of this administration."

Disputing Namfrel's claims, Maguindanao's controversial provincial election supervisor, Lintang Bedol, said Namfrel got its copies of election returns from the province.

Bedol, who was among the Comelec officials whose names were mentioned in the "Hello Garci" tapes, said that based on reports he got from poll officers from Maguindanao's various towns, Namfrel volunteers took their sixth copies of the election returns at the precinct level.

Bedol said those who retrieved the ERs for Namfrel were given their copies after they presented identification cards. He said that election inspectors relied on the IDs presented to them.

"(Namfrel) has not provided us with the list of its volunteers despite persistent request, even prior to the elections," Bedol said, adding the Comelec officers had no way to verify the identities of those who claimed the election returns.

If there was no such list, it was not clear from Bedol's remarks what was the basis used by election inspectors in releasing the election return copies to the ID bearers.

Elections took place

Separately, the chair of the volunteer group Citizens' Action for Responsible Elections (CARE), Romy Guiamel, said that residents of Maguindanao were able to vote on Election Day.

"Many people trooped to their precincts to cast their votes. There were elections in Maguindanao and we knew it took place because we have volunteers in the province," Guiamel said.

Guiamel's statement clashed with those from an official of the the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and concerned individuals who told the INQUIRER that balloting did not take place in many parts of the province.

Guiamel said his group—which works with the PPCRV—was able to monitor the conduct of elections in Maguindanao and these were generally peaceful.

Guiamel admitted that Namfrel volunteers failed to secure their copies of the election returns but he blamed this on lack of coordination between volunteers and the Comelec.

Guiamel said the failure of Namfrel volunteers to secure their ER copies did not only happen in Maguindanao but all over the region as well. *With reports from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Nash B. Maulana, Inquirer Mindanao*

Political operators make a killing in Mindanao

From page A1

party-list organizations, five of which had been accused of fronting for the Arroyo administration.

This was purportedly the case in the municipality of Hadji Mohammad Ajul—which was formed in 2006 and used to be part of Tuburan town—one of many areas in Mindanao where the canvassing of votes was being monitored by the watchdog group Bantay RA 7941.

Joven Diamante, the group's legal counsel, said he discovered the alleged voter-vote discrepancy when he visited Basilan to observe the work of the provincial board of canvassers.

"People should monitor the activities in the South because most of the cheating is happening there," he told the INQUIRER yesterday in a phone interview from Basilan.

Ninety-three groups are hoping to land seats in the next Congress via the party-list route.

On Sunday, Diamante said the six party-list groups got the following votes in Basilan: Aangat Tayo (2,685), Ahon Bayan (4,449), Ang Laban ng Indiginong Filipino or ALIF (5,075), Sulong! Barangay Movement (4,973), You Against Corruption and Poverty or Yacap (5,063) and Anak Mindanao (4,694).

What intrigued Bantay RA 7941, he said, was that the votes cast for the groups totaled 26,939—way over the 9,115 number of registered voters.

Except for Anak Mindanao, the groups have been accused of being front organizations of Malacañang in the May 14 party-list election, the lawyer said.

Outgoing Akbayan Rep. Loreta Ann Rosales yesterday confirmed that the five groups were also in her group's list of alleged Palace fronts.

Diamante called the attention of the board of canvassers in Basilan to the alleged vote-padding.

His group would also raise the matter with the National Board of Canvassers as soon as he got back to Manila, he said.

"We can't allow these irregularities to continue," he said. *With a report from Inquirer Research*

Bro. Mike tells GMA: Heed signs

From page A1

leaders" who would stand up against abuses.

"That I think is the sentiment (in) the results of the elections. People are looking for some alternative leaders (in) whom people could see hope for real change," Velarde said.

"Hopefully, if (the administration) reads (the results correctly), I think it's time for them to rethink and face the reality that their unpopularity could be overturned," he said. "They have the opportunity, they have three years."

"And I'm thinking, if only GMA will be GMA, as I know her, and act according to her own thinking without fear of being removed by people *na akala niya yun ang humahawak sa kanya* (she thinks have her in their control), she can still be a good leader. I think people will appreciate that," Velarde said.

He said the administration had "many shortcomings" but the opposition had not been able to muster enough people in the streets to oust her because the public was wary of "the same old faces."

He said Ms Arroyo should permanently bury her efforts to revise the 1987 Constitution.

Cha-cha—never again

"If I were her, I would use the time to do something good for the country. Restore confidence in the government. Restore credibility in her government," Velarde said.

"Accept the election results ... Second, don't ever revive Charter change. Don't touch that. Don't touch the Charter."

He said the polls would be credible if the current "trend" in the counting continued, even if the administration captured up to five Senate seats.

EL SHADDAI members in Hong Kong raise their hands for blessings during a prayer rally on Sunday led by Bro. Mike Velarde. PHILIP TUBEZA

"If the trend is maintained and that is not altered along the way, that can be accepted by the people," Velarde said.

He also said that if the administration wanted to change the Constitution's economic provisions, "we can do this through simple amendments."

"But not the political structure because that will start another squabble and she won't be able to do anything," Velarde said.

Just prepare for 2010

"I think Cha-cha should not be revived. That would distract the administration from focusing on the economy. Charter change can really be divisive," he said.

"We should now set aside our differences ... Let Gloria finish her term and (let's) do something that would help our economy."

Velarde, who is still active in the real estate industry, said many investors he had talked to were interested in the Philippines if only the country had political stability.

He said he doubted that the opposition could succeed if it made a third attempt to impeach Ms Arroyo.

"If I were in their position, I would prepare for the 2010 elections. Otherwise, their gains today could vanish because the people would get angry thinking '*Ano ba kayo? Kami ang naghihirap* (Who do you think you are? We are the ones suffering)," Velarde said.

A future president?

Velarde said the potential for people power "is still there" but that the people were fed up for lack of a real alternative to President Arroyo.

Velarde said that with his spectacular win in Pampanga, Roman Catholic priest Fr. Eddie "Among" Panlilio could turn out to be the best candidate for the 2010 presidential election.

Velarde said he was prepared to endorse Panlilio for President if he made good on his promise to stamp out "jueteng" and corruption in Pampanga.

"If he makes good, and I think he will ... he could be the next President that we need," Velarde said. "We need people like him."

"In spite of the many shortcoming of this administration of Gloria, especially with the charges against her, why is it that her enemies cannot gather people in the streets anymore?" Velarde said.

Why a priest?

"The feedback that I get is that it's because they see the same old faces. They tell me, 'We're tired of these politicians Bro. Mike. Isn't there anyone else?'" he said.

He said the people were looking for a leader they could "really trust and who can provide a vision of an attainable future."

He added: "The question is why a priest? I was told Fr. Ed Panlilio is really a different kind of priest. He was really involved in social work and they could not credibly attack him."

Velarde said he was so impressed with what he heard about Panlilio from El Shaddai members in Pampanga.

"Our disciples there told me 'Bro. Mike, when we visit Fr. Ed, he's even the one who prepares coffee for us.'... There was groundswell and so, when I heard from our members, I said, 'OK, let's support him.'"

Real people's revolution

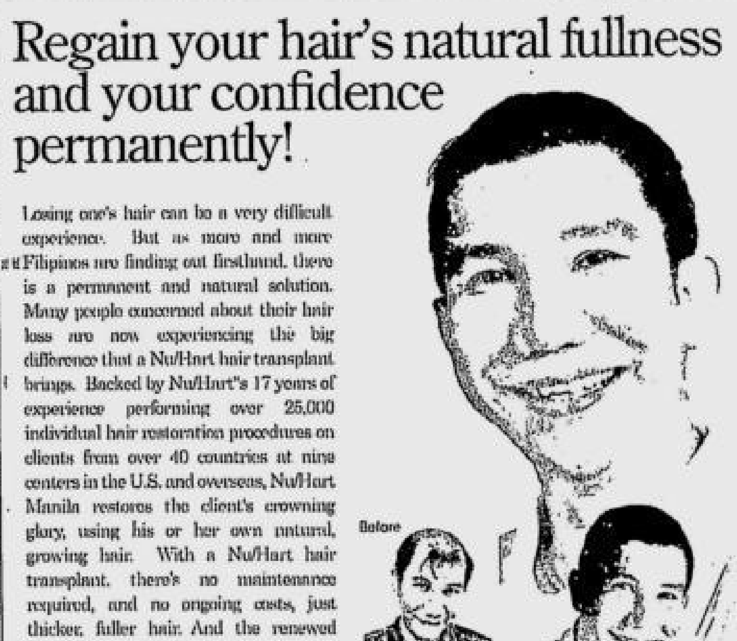
Velarde called Panlilio's victory "a real democratic people's revolution."

"The news I received was that the money (Panlilio's) enemies were doling out were taken by the voters but they used these for Fr. Ed. They were the ones who made posters for Fr. Ed and bought food for his watchers," Velarde said.

He said the priest's victory debunked the "myth" that those without "goons and gold" could not win.

"What happened in Pampanga is an eye-opener. *Gumising na tayo, lalo na tayong maliliit* (It's time to wake up, especially us, ordinary people)."

"Hopefully, people really will realize that the power for change is in our hands and not in politicians," Velarde said.



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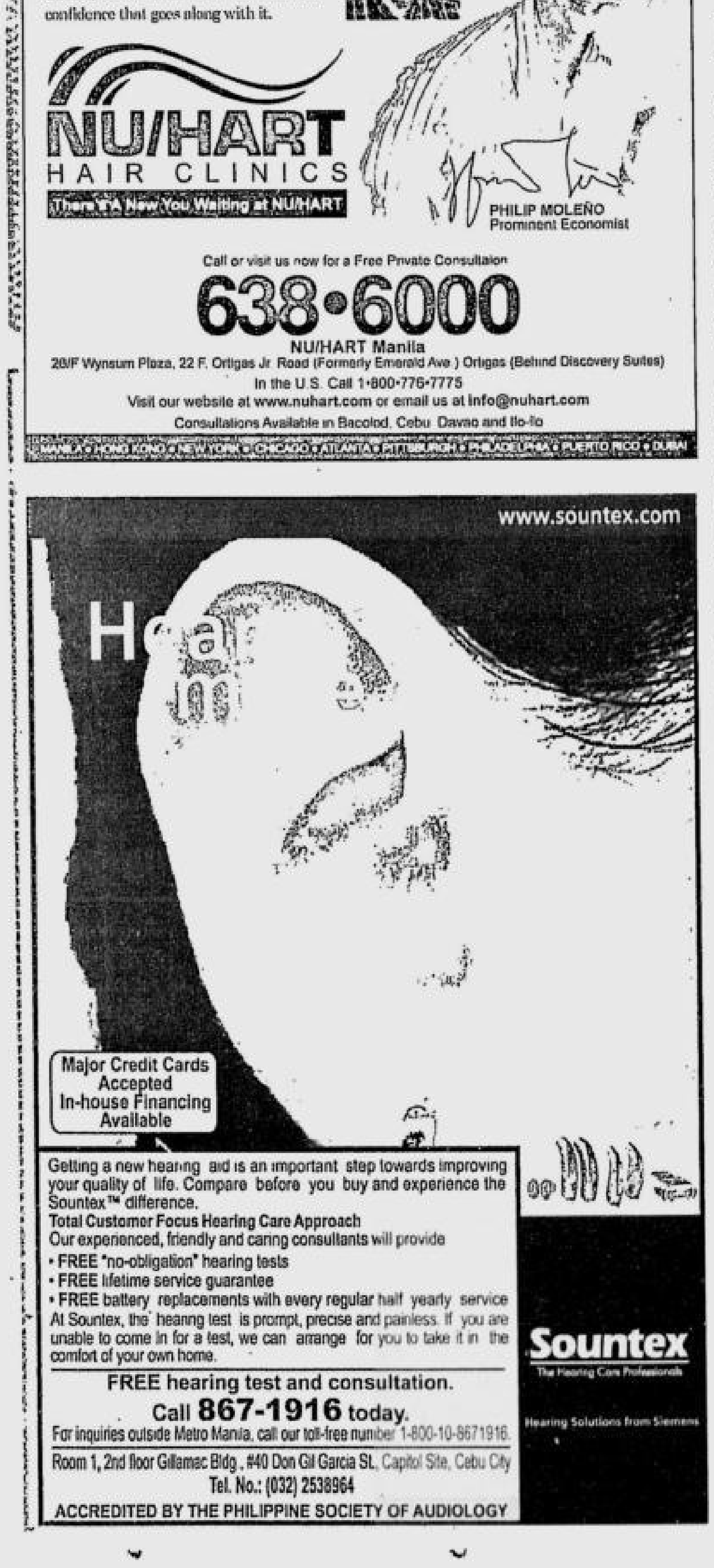

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2 cops in school burning implicate mayoral bet

By Alcuin Papa

TWO POLICEMEN ACCUSED IN THE burning of a school in Taysan, Batangas, are now pointing to another mayoral candidate as possibly having ordered the fire that killed two poll workers on May 15.

Police Insp. Robert Marinda and SPO2 William Relos also denied any direct involvement in the burning of the Pinagabayanan Elementary School which killed teacher Nellie Banaag and poll watcher Leticia Ramos.

Marinda told reporters at Camp Crame yesterday that one of his siblings was a teacher.

"Why would I do something like that when my sibling is a teacher," a defiant Marinda said in Filipino.

POLICEMEN remove charred ballot boxes in Taysan, Batangas. Two poll watchers were killed when armed men stormed a schoolhouse where the ballots were being tallied and set it on fire on May 15. REUTERS

Witnesses said Marinda and Relos had set ballot boxes on fire that engulfed the school.

Nissan Safari

The two members of the PNP's Regional Special Operations Group said that a Nissan Safari owned by one of the mayoral candidates, Victor Portugal, was seen in the vicinity of the school just before the fire.

They said Portugal got 25 votes in the polling center at the school while incumbent Mayor Hernando Villena garnered around 1,000 votes.

Police investigators probing the incident had said Villena could have employed the RSOG men involved in the burning.

"Nothing could be gained by the petitioners in the burning of the Pinagbayanan Elementary School," Marinda and Relos said in a petition for habeas corpus, which they were set to file before the Quezon City Regional Trial Court late yesterday.

If there was anyone who should have been investigated, Marinda said it should have been Taysan deputy police chief Insp. Ruel de la Cruz, who led a small contingent of security forces guarding the school at time.

Heading home

Marinda said he was 11 kilometers away from the town heading home when he got a text message ordering him to proceed to the school at around 1:30 a.m.

"It appeared to be a vendetta. Someone was losing the count in the precinct," Marinda's lawyer Romeo Esmero said. Esmero explained that Portugal had threatened revenge on Relos for arresting one of the politician's supporters.

But Marinda was not categorical about accusing Portugal of starting the fire.

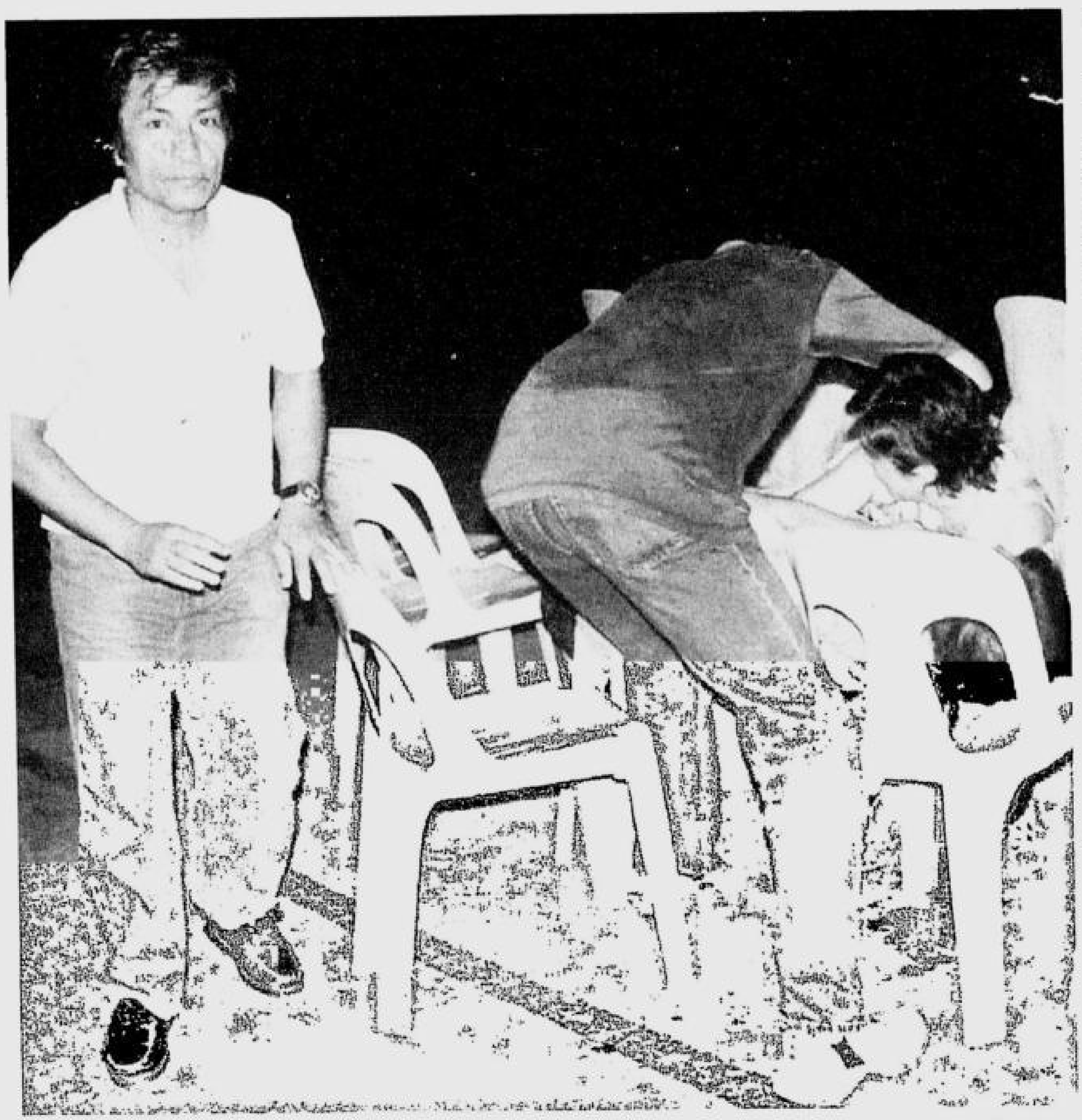
Marinda and Relos also questioned their detention at Camp Crame since no formal charges had been filed against them.

Officers sacked

De la Cruz and Taysan chief of police Chief Insp. Elpidio Ramirez have been detained at Camp Crame and relieved of their posts while the investigation is going on.

The RSOG regional chief, Supt. James Brilliantes, has also been relieved.

Investigators have said Ramirez had ordered De la Cruz and his men to pull out of the school. They also said they received information RSOG men were using one of the Villena's houses as a safehouse.



HIS WIFE and bodyguards rush to help Mayor Philip Velasco who was shot dead on Sunday night in Bacarra, Ilocos Norte. AFP

Reelected Ilocos mayor shot dead

From page A1

tion condemning the attack. He also asked Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil, Ilocos police regional director, to augment the town's police force.

Velasco was seated with Andaya and other local officials in the front row at about 11 p.m. when the gunman approached from the bleachers and shot the mayor at close range.

The mayor was hit in the neck and below the armpit while Andaya was shot in the abdomen. Both Velasco and Andaya died while being treated at the Ilocos Norte Provincial Hospital in Laoag City, about 2 kilometers away.

Velasco's security escorts killed the gunman as he attempted to flee. He remained unidentified but the police recovered a Nokia 1100 cellular phone from him.

Board Member Shirley Ong, who was seated near Velasco, and four others were hurt and taken to a nearby hospital.

Ong was hit by a stray bullet in the arm while four others, identified as Josefina Bermudez, Analyn Fabillaran, Josefina Galapon and Ron-ron Lungabon, were injured during the stampede.

Overall toll

The killings of Velasco and Andaya put at 153 the INQUIRER's overall death toll in poll-related violence since the start of the election period on Jan. 14.

The Philippine National Police last week rolled back its toll of lives lost from 143 to 41, saying a review showed the 102 deaths previously reported were not politically motivated. A day earlier, PNP officials had reported that the May 14 polls were the most peaceful in recent years.

Spectators in the Bacarra auditorium were watching an intermission number by a local group when gunshots rang out. The mayor's wife, Maria Concepcion, was seated beside him but she was unhurt.

De la Cruz, who was near Velasco, said no one noticed the gunman approach the mayor until the first round of gunshots.

"His security men were just standing right behind the mayor but the gunman had started firing when they noticed him," said De la Cruz, who was Velasco's running mate.

P100,000 reward

He said the town government was offering a P100,000 reward to anyone who could give information on the mastermind.

The farmers' festival was the first public event that Velasco attended after being proclaimed on May 16.

De la Cruz said officials were in the dark as to who might have been behind the murder.

He said the mayor had not told them of any threat on his life.

"The last time we spoke, the mayor even commented that the (elections) were the most peaceful in the town," he said.

UK officer plays it straight, tells squad he's gay

From page A1

Since the British military began allowing homosexuals to serve in the Armed Forces in 2000, none of its fears—about harassment, discord, blackmail, bullying or an erosion of unit cohesion or military effectiveness—have come to pass, according to the Ministry of Defense, current and former members of the services and academics specializing in the military.

They all say the biggest news about the policy is that there is no news. It has for the most part become a nonissue.

Britain's Ministry of Defense does not compile figures on how many gay men and lesbians are openly serving, and it says that the number of people who have come out publicly in the past seven years is still relatively low.

But the ministry is clearly proud of how smoothly homosexuals have been integrated and is trying to make life easier for them.

"What we're hoping to do is to, over a period of time, reinforce the message that people who are gay, lesbian and the like are welcomed in the Armed Forces and we don't discriminate against them in any way," a British defense official said in an interview, speaking on condition of anonymity in accordance with the ministry's practice. *New York Times News Service*

Villanueva's son is new Bocaue mayor

BOCAUE, BULACAN—A son of Bro. Eduardo "Eddie" Villanueva, leader of the Jesus is Lord Movement, won the mayoral race in this town.

Eduardo Villanueva Jr., who is facing murder charges in connection with the May 4 killing of an Army soldier, garnered 18,319 votes while his closest rival, incumbent Vice Mayor Kennedy Valdez, got 12,420. Third was reelectionist Mayor Serafin de la Cruz, who received 7,785 votes.

Villanueva's running mate, Jose Santiago Jr., won with 15,147 votes.

Along with Francisco Villa of this town, Villanueva, 35, was charged with murder in the killing of Cpl. Leonardo Pataray of the Army's 3rd Infantry Battalion based in Hagonoy town.

Pataray's fellow soldiers identified Villanueva as the one who allegedly ordered Villa to shoot at their group after a quarrel over election billboards and posters.

Villanueva was the top councilor here in 1998. He became mayor in 2001 but was defeated by De la Cruz in 2004. *Carmela Reyes, Inquirer Central Luzon*

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Comelec explains why it's faster than Namfrel

By Nikko Dizon

THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS count is faster than the Namfrel count because of the long hours the commissioners have put into the canvassing and the relatively few manifestations made by election lawyers before the National Board of Canvassers, among other things, according to Comelec spokesperson James Arthur Jimenez.

The tabulation of the certificates of canvass (CoCs) at the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) averages 10 hours a day, including some breaks, since it began on May 16.

On Sunday, the commissioners began canvassing at 5 p.m., took an hour-and-a-half break for dinner, and continued to work until shortly before 2 a.m.

The canvassing at the PICC is by all means a tedious process.

The national board of canvassers tabulates the provincial CoCs as they arrive at the canvassing vènue.

The ballot box is opened in front of the National Board of Canvassers and the election lawyers, the serial numbers of the three padlocks are read out loud.

Then the provincial CoCs and the municipal statements of votes (SoVs) are brought out, their serial numbers also read out loud, and checked if the entries, especially the total number of votes, are the same.

The documents are laid out on a long table for the election lawyers to examine.

If there are discrepancies, the lawyers could make a manifestation and the CoC is set aside until the differences are resolved.

If the documents are flawless, the commissioner in charge of the province from which the CoC came from then reads out loud the candidates' scores one by one.

The process does not end there. The CoCs are sent to the tabulations group right beside the national board of canvassers. The documents are then audited and encoded and then, audited again.

Comelec executive director Jose Pio Joson said that because of the layers of the encoding and two layers of auditing of the tabulated CoCs, the poll body was releasing the partial results at least two days behind the partial, unofficial results computed by the media based on the tabulated CoCs by the national board of canvassers.

But Joson said the canvassing could slow down when CoCs from controversial provinces begin to come in, such as those from Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur, after the May 26 special elections.

"At the rate we are going, however, we might be able to proclaim eight to 10 senators soon," Joson said.

Pichay back at No. 15 after 4 hours at No. 10

ANTIRIOT troops guarding the Philippine International Convention Center in Pasay City on Monday fail to stop a group of activists protesting the alleged massive cheating in the May 14 elections. REM ZAMORA

From page A1

Pichay slid back to 15th place after the poll body, sitting as the National Board of Canvassers (NBC), went on recess after Sunday midnight.

As of 6 last night, Pichay had further slid to 16th place.

By then it was 6-4-2 in favor of the Genuine Opposition (GO) in the senatorial race.

It was still 8-2-2 for GO in the quick count by the National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections.

In the Comelec count, Pichay dropped five rungs after returns from the Vatican city-state, Pasig City and the provinces of Rizal, Bukidnon, Baguio, Palawan, Benguet, Quezon, Bataan and Agusan del Norte were read out at around 11 p.m. on Sunday.

Pichay's leap earlier was mainly due to the more than 400,000 votes he garnered in Pampanga, the home province of President Macapagal-Arroyo. He placed sixth in the province.

The TU senatorial candidate failed to break into the Top 12 again when the canvassing of returns from two foreign posts and seven provinces ended at 6 p.m. yesterday.

Even the 137,769 votes, the biggest he got yesterday, from his home province, Surigao del Norte, failed to push him back into the winning circle.

The biggest gainer was TU candidate Juan Miguel Zubiri who rose from 12th place to 10th as votes from Negros Occidental, where he ranked second, and from Zamboanga Sibugay, where he ranked fifth, were canvassed.

Legarda still No. 1

Loren Legarda remained in first place, followed by fellow GO candidate Francis Escudero based on partial totals computed by the INQUIRER from the certificates of canvass read by the NBC.

Manuel Villar (GO) still ranked third, followed by Panfilo Lacson (GO) in fourth place, the previous spot of independent Francis Pangilinan, who slid to fifth place. Noynoy Aquino (GO) was in sixth place.

Edgardo Angara (TU) remained in seventh place, followed by Joker Arroyo (TU). Alan Peter Cayetano (GO) was in 9th place while Zubiri was in 10th place.

Independent candidate Gregorio Honasan reamined at No. 11 while Ralph Recto (TU) slid back to No. 12.

GO's Antonio Trillanes IV and Koko Pimentel were at No. 13 and No. 14, respectively.

The Comelec has so far canvassed all the 154 CoCs from the overseas and local absentee voting, CoCs from 52 provinces and CoCs from 6 cities in Metro Manila. There are still 45 local CoCs to be canvassed.

The poll body has so far canvassed 57 percent of local CoCs and 100 percent of CoCs for the overseas absentee voting.

Not included in the computation were votes canvassed from Marinduque and Mt. Province where discrepancies between the CoC and the statement of votes remained unresolved.

Also No. 1 in Namfrel count

In the Namfrel count as of 4:28 p.m., Legarda stayed at No. 1 followed by Escudero as Namfrel completed a little more than 46 percent of tabulations from all precincts nationwide.

Lacson was at No. 3; Villar, No. 4; Pangilinan, No. 5; Aquino, No. 6; Angara, No. 7.

Honasan traded places with Arroyo. Honasan rose to No. 8 as early as late Sunday night and stayed there until early evening yesterday.

Arroyo slid to No. 9. Cayetano was at No. 10; Trillanes, No. 11; and Pimentel, No. 12.

Zubiri who briefly joined the Magic 12 remained at No. 13.

In the Comelec count, Pichay was the top scorer in Surigao del Sur, where he is congressman, after getting 137,769 votes, way higher than second placer Legarda's 89,787 votes. It was not enough to help him hang on the winning circle.

Though Pichay lorded it over in his province, the opposition still dominated the Magic 12 in Surigao del Sur at 6-4-2. The other TU candidates in the winning circle in the province were Angara (8th), Zubiri (9th) and Cesar Montano of TU (11th).

Montano was the top scorer in Zamboanga Sibugay with 87,473 votes, but it was not enough to help him reach the Magic 12. Montano ranked 17th overall. *With reports from Maan Festejo and Kathleen Olarte*

NAMFREL

PARTYLIST

7103,421 out of 224,748 precincts

As of 4:28 pm, May 21, 2007

1	BAYAN MUNA	172,932
2	BUHAY	159,312
3	GABRIELA	137,960
4	CIBAC	101,409
5	APEC	91,158
6	A TEACHER	82,477
7	AKBAYAN	79,955
8	COOP-NATCCO	73,223
9	ANAKPAWIS	66,843
10	ABONO	61,637
11	KAKUSA	59,475
12	ARC	55,259
13	BATAS	53,604
14	ABS	53,380
15	ALAGAD	47,748
16	AGAP	44,770
17	FPJPM	43,143
18	AMIN	42,423
19	BUTIL	39,908
20	AN WARAY	39,336
21	KABATAAN	38,823
22	SENIOR CITIZENS	36,837
23	ABA-AKO	35,700
24	ANAD	31,483
25	COCOFED	30,966
26	VFP	29,743
27	ABAKADA	27,927
28	AVE	26,946
29	ABANSE! PINAY	26,599
30	ANAK	26,495

Comelec issues new guidelines to speed up count

By Jerome Aning

THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS yesterday laid down new "policy guidelines" to speed up the canvassing of election results in provinces and municipalities, which in some cases delayed the transmission of senatorial vote tallies to Manila.

In Resolution No. 8062, approved by the en banc, the Comelec allowed any winning candidate to be proclaimed even if he or she had a pending disqualification case, which may pertain to citizenship, residency requirements, declaration as a nuisance candidate or other violations of the Fair Elections Act.

"This policy, however, shall be without prejudice to the continuation of the hearing and resolution of the involved cases," the Comelec said.

This means that once the poll body rules on such cases, anyone may be ousted from office, according to Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr.

The suspension of canvassing and/or proclamation of winning candidates was limited to only two instances: When a failure of elections is declared in an area and when the composition or proceedings of the board of canvassers are declared illegal.

The Comelec also disallowed the transfer of canvassing venues from the provinces to Manila.

However, the poll body may reconstitute provincial, city and municipal BOCs if it deems necessary.

IN THE KNOW

Protests hamper Namfrel count

IT IS THE PROCESS THAT SPELLS the difference between the official canvass by the Commission on Elections and the quick count by the National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel).

"As mandated by law, the Comelec has to wait for the election returns from the precincts to go through the municipal and provincial levels before we get the Certificates of Canvass and come out with the tabulation," said Adolfo Ibañez, head of the Comelec Special Action Center.

For Namfrel, "right from the precinct level, [it] forwards results from election returns to its regional centers then to its national centers for computation," Ibañez said.

Namfrel is the citizens' group officially accredited by the Comelec to conduct the quick count. Because of its accreditation, the group is given the sixth copy of the election returns from the precinct level.

Election protests and the suspension of counting in some areas as a result of complaints over cheating also hamper the Comelec count.

"There are instances when we have to postpone the inclusion of some precincts in the counting because of protests," Ibañez said.

The Comelec and Namfrel do not tabulate the results in the same areas at the same time. They tabulate results from areas in a random way, depending on whatever results reach each group first, according to Ibañez.

Lawrence de Guzman, Inquirer Research

Surprise! Comelec outpaces Namfrel 'quick count' tally

From page A1

A Namfrel official said the group was not engaged in a race with the Comelec.

Monsod said that while the Comelec always caught up with Namfrel, it did so three days earlier this year than in the 2004 elections.

"Usually, the Comelec catches up with Namfrel on the ... 10th day. This year, it did so on the seventh day," he said.

Was Namfrel a bit slower this year following bugs in its software and glitches in its Internet connection?

"No. In fact, Namfrel was faster this year than in 2004 (if you compare the number of votes counted in as many days after the elections)," Monsod said.

"Maybe the Comelec was a bit faster," he said.

Monsod said there was nothing irregular about the Comelec catching up with Namfrel.

ERs and CoCs

While Namfrel starts counting the votes before the Comelec, it bases its tallies on 300,000 or so election returns (ERs).

The Comelec bases its official count on only about 140 certificates of canvass (CoCs) made at the provincial level.

"Namfrel starts its count at the precinct level. Depending on the number of precincts in a municipality or city, the Comelec has 20 or so tabulation committees in every municipality or city," Monsod said.

"Namfrel can't match that number of people with its volunteers," he said.

While the Comelec starts its national canvassing later than Namfrel, it only has to go through more than a hundred CoCs.

"Now, the Comelec doesn't start to count the votes (for national positions like senator) until it reaches the provincial level. Although, (the commissioners) start late, they only have to go through 130 to 140 CoCs," Monsod said.

Verification process

The verification process being followed by Namfrel is slowing down its count.

Namfrel chair Edward Go earlier said Namfrel did not immediately include newly arrived tabulations until after these were verified.

Add to this the fact that Namfrel employs several steps of checking and counterchecking before it releases updates to media.

Go dismissed allegations that Namfrel was selecting data only from some areas to establish a pattern in favor of certain candidates.

"We do not do any kind of trending. We do not select the data to be posted. Everything depends on the flow of reports from the field and how quickly these are verified," he said.

Eric Alvia, Namfrel secretary general, said the group's quick count would eventually catch up with that of the Comelec.

"There will be a point of convergence. Even if the Comelec has already reached 7 million, the important issue is whether our count is accurate," Alvia said.

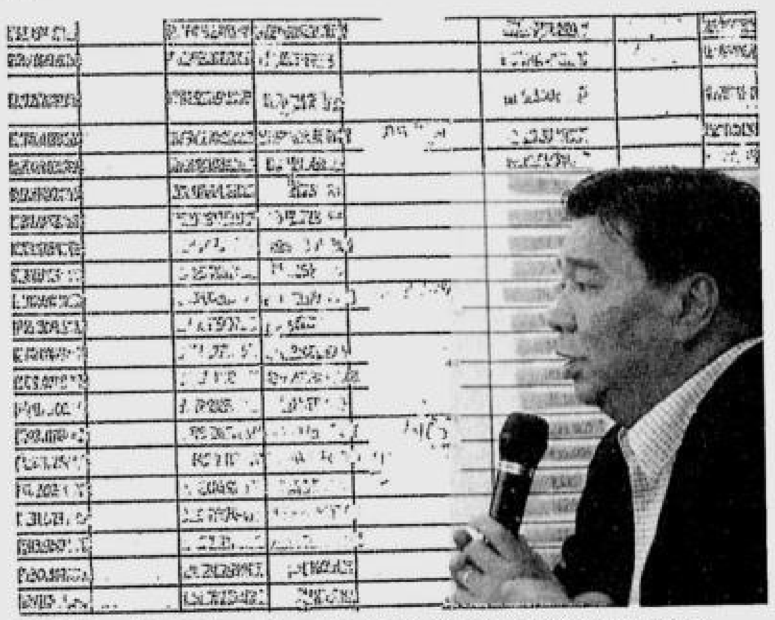
Namfrel is holding its quick count operations at the La Salle gym in Greenhills, San Juan. School officials have given Namfrel only until Thursday, May 24 to use the gym.

"We are still hopeful that the pace will quicken," Go said at a press conference early yesterday afternoon.

In case the quick count is not completed by then, "hopefully we will be given an extension," Alvia said in a radio interview.

ELECTI
FRA
VOTE
SH. VING
SA GABRIELA
WOMEN'S
PARTYLIST
STOP
VOTE
GABRIELA

UNIDENTIFIED twins hold up placards during a protest outside the PICC where the Comelec is currently holding the official canvass of the May 14 local and congressional elections. AP/BULLIT MARQUEZ)



SEN. Franklin Drilon, Liberal Party president, answers questions during a press briefing at the LP headquarters in Makati City on Monday. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Defeated Batangas gov wants Vilma's win nullified

By Jerome Aning

SAYING THAT HIS CLIENT WAS NOT sour-graping, the lawyer of outgoing governor Armando Sanchez yesterday asked the Commission on Elections to nullify the proclamation of Lipa Mayor Vilma Santos-Recto as the winning gubernatorial candidate in the May 14 elections because of "massive fraud." *(See related story on Page A13.)*

The petition is one among many petitions seeking the annulment of the proclamations of winning candidates now flooding the Commission on Elections.

In his petition before the Comelec main office in Manila, filed by his lawyer Ferdinand Topacio, Sanchez said Recto's proclamation was "null and void and of no legal force and effect."

Recto was proclaimed on Saturday.

However, Comelec suspended the proclamation for vice governor after Recto's running mate, Edwin Ermita, filed a petition charging a failure of elections in Taysan and Sto. Tomas.

"We have a saying that what is sauce for the goose should be sauce for the gander," Sanchez said in his petition, referring to Ermita's petition.

"Since the commission had already ruled that there was a failure of elections in certain areas of Batangas, it cannot be denied that the failure extends to all parts of Batangas province, and thus no proclamation for the position of governor may be validly made," Sanchez said.

Sanchez belongs to the Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi) party while Recto, a popular movie actor, ran under Lakas-CMD. Both parties are pro-administration.

In his seven-page petition, Sanchez referred to what he called "Oplan Magic Wand" allegedly carried out by Recto's camp which consisted of ballot-stuffing, substitution of election returns, acts of violence and terrorism, direct and indirect vote-buying and other violations of the election code.

A candidate for councilor in Lipa, Miguel Lina III, filed a similar complaint on May 19.

Among other things, Sanchez accused the Recto-Ermita camp of distributing money to mayors of 14 towns, "overkill" in the hiring of watchers per precinct, and the alleged use by Recto of the resources of the Lipa city government and the office of her husband, Sen. Ralph Recto, in her campaign.

He said ballot boxes went missing in Nasugbu, Calatagan, Calaca, Lobo, Bauan, San Pascual, Mabini, Malvar, Lipa, Balete, Ibaan, San Jose, San Juan and Rosario towns. When they surfaced, he claimed, the boxes had been stuffed with ballots that had been prepared in advance.

Sanchez also cited the case of Balete town, which had a 127-percent voter turnout.

To show that this was not just a case of "sour-graping," Topacio recalled that when Sanchez ran for govenor in 1995 and lost, Sanchez "did not file any protest because he felt that he lost fair and square."

"This time, though, Governor Sanchez can't just stand still and allow the real will of the people of Batangas to be subverted," Topacio said.

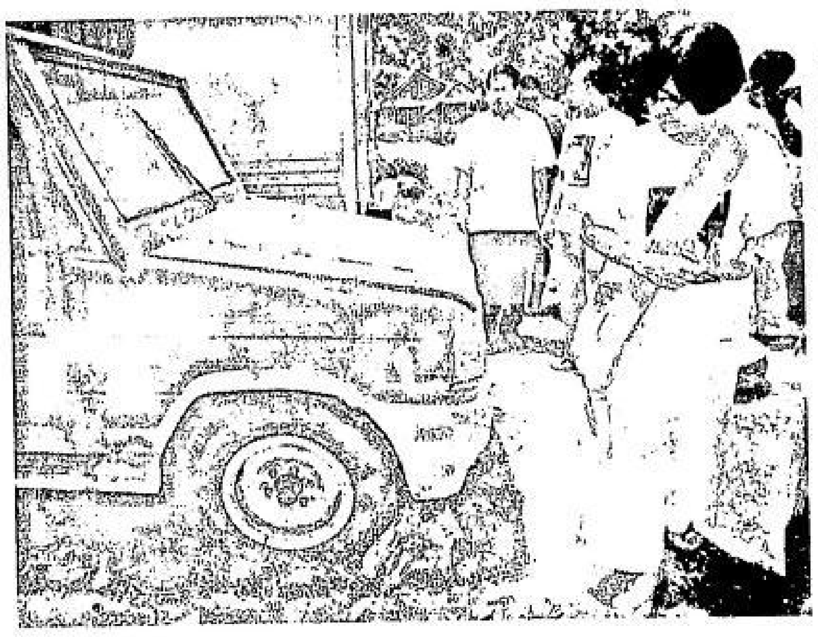
Meanwhile, Pasig City mayoral candidate and outgoing Rep. Robert "Dodot" Jaworski Jr. also asked the Comelec to void the proclamation of his rival, Robert Eusebio.

According to Jaworski and his allied petitioners, the May 14 elections in the city was characterized by "massive fraud and irregularities, disenfranchisement of voters, terrorism and open and blatant vote-buying." They submitted statements of 41 witnesses.

On Friday, Jaworksi tried in vain to stop Eusebio's proclamation but the city's board of canvassers ruled otherwise.

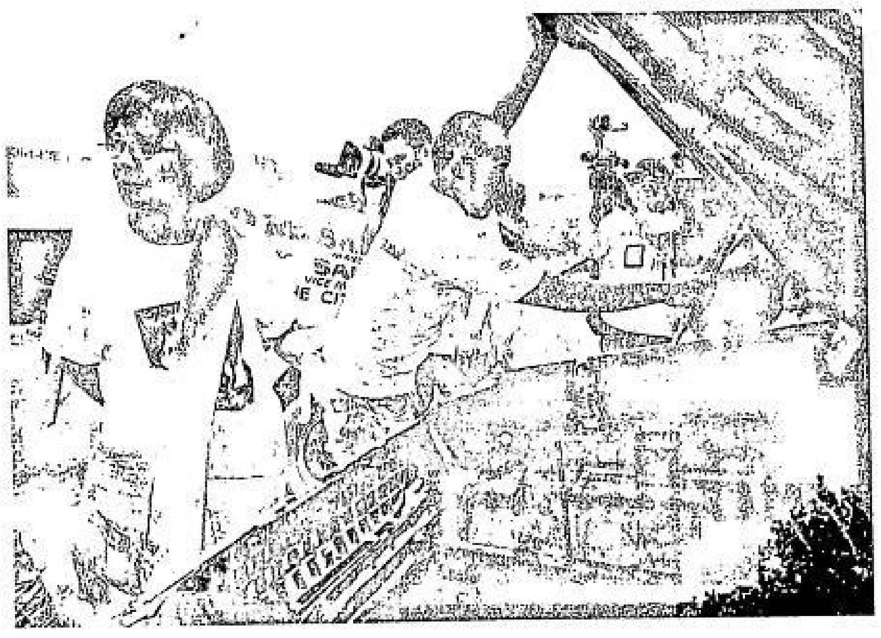
Where's Jonas? Burgoses visit Army camp

From page A1



EDITA BURGOS, wife of press freedom icon Jose Burgos Jr., examines the impounded vehicle from which the license plate spotted on the van used to abduct her son Jonas was taken. The car not only had missing plates, but had no engine. The military said it had been stolen.

JOAN BONDOC



because it was used allegedly to transport illegally cut logs.

Elevated terrain

Curiously, the camp's elevated terrain would have made it impossible for thieves to lug a car engine from it to the residential side of San Jose del Monte without being spotted.

"We don't know Jonas. We only read about him in the papers," Cordero said.

Edita, who came to the camp with former Sen. Bobby Tañada, said she remained hopeful her son was alive.

"Whoever is holding him, I beg of you, please release him. If he has done wrong, charge him in court," said the widow of the press freedom icon.

Tañada urged the Army to speed up the investigation of Jonas' disappearance, one of over 180 recorded by the human rights group Karapatan since 2001. "Its been three weeks since he disappeared," Tañada said.

Last week, Edita motored to Abucay, Bataan, to verify the identity of a man found dead on April 29 with torture marks on his neck and two gunshot wounds in the head.

The 36-year-old Jonas, who had been teaching organic farming to peasants in Bulacan, was forcibly taken by still unidentified men while eating in a restaurant at the Ever Gotesco Mall on April 28.

Impounded vehicles

Cordero said his men had not noticed the license plate was missing until the story broke in the media a few days after Jonas' abduction.

According to Cordero, the license plates of impounded vehicles are never removed from the vehicles. But of the three impounded vehicles seen in the camp yesterday only one had a license plate.

Col. Ernesto Benitez Jr., deputy brigade commander, said the alleged involvement of the 56th IB in Jonas' disappearance was being investigated by the Inspectorate General of the Philippine Army and the Provost General of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Benitez said Lt. Col. Melquiades Feliciano, head of the 56th IB, was under custody at Army headquarters.

"He is under administrative suspension. That means he has lost his authority and responsibility to command the unit," Benitez said.

AFP information chief Lt. Col. Bartolome Bacarro yesterday said the military had completed its investigation into the license plate.

He said he expected the Provost Marshal General's Office to send its findings to AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. He said it was up to Esperon to release the findings. *With a report from Christine O. Avendaño*

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A failing grade

EDITORIAL

ON AN ELECTION NIGHT TALK SHOW ON GMA 7, host Winnie Monsod asked a publisher, "On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate the Comelec?" The publisher replied, "Minus 1." The publisher later told some journalist-friends: "I was actually being generous. I should have rated the Comelec minus 10."

The answer may have been somewhat facetious, but there is in fact justification for giving the Commission on Elections a failing grade. It has not fulfilled its duty of safeguarding the integrity of the ballot; on the contrary, it has been one of the major obstacles to the holding of free, honest and credible elections. It has not been fair and impartial in its decisions on controversial cases. It has itself been involved in some irregularities.

Item. On April 12, Ateneo professor Danton Remoto said his group, Ang Ladlad, was approached in September 2006 by a person who said he had connections with the Comelec who was asking for P100,000 so that Ang Ladlad could be accredited for the party-list elections. In another interview, a lawyer for two disqualified party-list groups said his clients had been asked for P500,000 each for the reversal of the Comelec decisions against them. Up to this day there is no word on what the Comelec has done about these allegations.

Item. The Comelec withheld the names of party-list nominees from the public. It disclosed the names only after the Supreme Court, in a decision on May 3, ordered the body to immediately disclose the names of the party-list nominees or face contempt. The high court said the non-disclosure by the Comelec was against the right to information enshrined in the Constitution.

Item. The Comelec kept Alan Peter Cayetano, a senatorial candidate of the Genuine Opposition, waiting until the 11th hour before acting on his petition to declare Joselito "Pepito" Cayetano, who had adopted the nickname "Peter" for his candidacy, a nuisance candidate. The Comelec resolution came on May 11, too close to Election Day, May 14, to be of much help to Alan Peter's candidacy. Alan Peter said that it even created confusion about his candidacy.

Item. Akbayan on May 9 asked the Comelec to disqualify 12 party-list groups, the first batch of what it called dubious or "government front" organizations that the Comelec allowed to participate in this year's elections. We have no complete report yet on how it acted on this petition.

Item. From correspondents' reports from the field, it appears that there was no actual voting in Maguindanao, which reported a 12-0 shutout in favor of Team Unity senatorial candidates. But the truth is slowly coming out: a teacher who asked not to be identified said that she and other teachers were told to fill up blank ballots with the names of Team Unity candidates. Students and other children were asked to mark the ballots with their thumbprints and sign their names on the voters' list. What were the Comelec officials doing all the time? Or were they involved in the scheme to make all the TU candidates win in Maguindanao?

What the people will never forget is the P1.3-billion poll computerization scam. The Supreme Court voided the contract "for having been made and executed with inexplicable haste" and "in clear violation not only of the law and settled jurisprudence" but also of the Comelec's own bidding rules and requirements. The Court said that "the pith and soul of democracy—credible, orderly and peaceful elections—have been put in jeopardy by the illegal and abusive acts of the Comelec."

The Comelec paid about P850 million to the suppliers. This is taxpayers' money that is expected to go down the drain, as the computers have not been found accurate and secure enough to be used in elections. Who made money on this transaction?

The present Comelec has "out-Perez'd" the infamous Comelec headed by Leonardo B. Perez during the Marcos regime, which was noted for its lack of ability to count properly. The present Comelec's shenanigans and involvement in many irregularities will ensure that it will go down in history as one of the worst Comelecs the country has ever had. Something has to be done about the present state of affairs before the presidential election in 2010, when it may repeat its role in the scandal-ridden presidential election of 2004.

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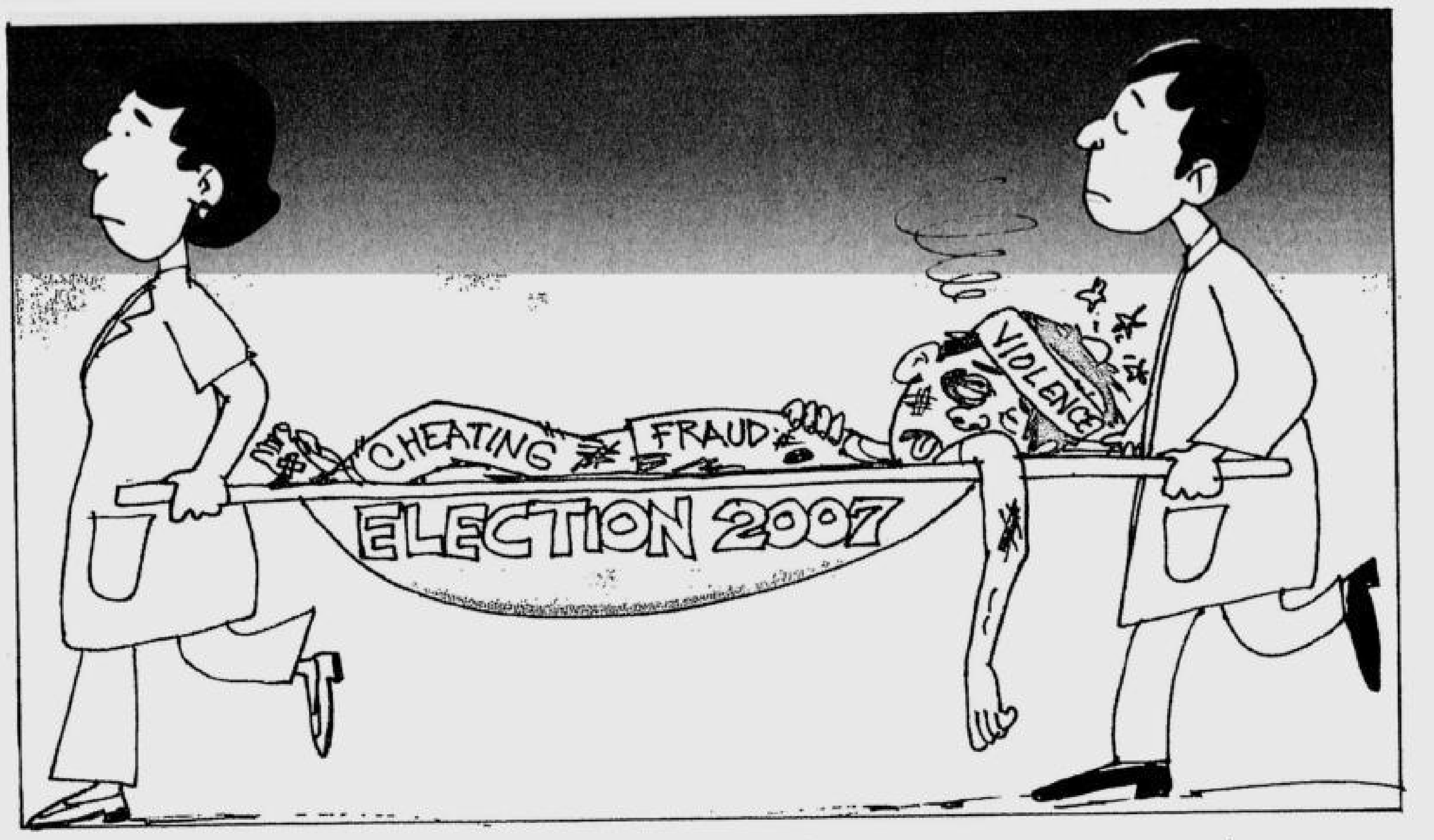


Impunity's limits

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

"ALL NATIONS ARE CONSTRUCTED ON THE basis of great rememberings and great forgettings," Ernest Renan wrote. Is today's frenzy over election results, actual or fudged, mutating into amnesia that smothers other issues?

Impunity for crime here drives parents to "wear down the stones of public squares," in the words of a Honduran mother searching for her abducted son. A recent INQUIRER photo shows Edith, the widow of the late press freedom advocate Jose Burgos Jr. She stares at a dumped corpse in a macabre ritual more mothers of desaparecidos agonize through.

"No," Edith says, the article reports. It's not the body of her third child: 36-year-old agriculturist Jonas. In a Quezon City mall, burly men had bundled Jayjay into a car traced to the 56th Infantry Battalion. Jayjay has not been seen or heard from since.

Only motorcycle keys were left of Redemptorist Fr. Rosaleo "Rudy" Romano, abducted by Marcos agents in Cebu in July 1985. Olongapo publisher Romeo Legaspi disappeared in January 1993. Sto. Tomas students were among those who vanished in paranoid communist pogroms. Muslim community leader Datu Abdullah Sadurah Alah disappeared. And kidnapped UP students Karen Empeno and Sherlyn Cadapan have never surfaced.

Abductors, meanwhile, loll in impunity. In a Mother's Day gathering of desaparecido parents, at Quezon City's Good Shepherd convent, Edith said: "I have forgiven my son's abductors, his torturers, even their Commander in Chief. If we accept what has happened, and forgive the wrong done us, the dawn will come early..."

Did the capo di tutti capi listen? "The weak can never forgive," Asian statesman Mahatma Gandhi once said. "Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong... (Even when violence appears) to do good, the good is only temporary. The evil it does is permanent..."

Forgiveness, however, does not extinguish accountability. "Men are unable to forgive what they cannot punish," Hannah Arendt stressed in her essay on Nazi terror.

That's precisely the point of "Let the Stones Cry Out." Published by the Protestant National Council of Churches here, this 83-page report documents 836 politically motivated killings since 2001. Most remain unsolved. After the Palm Sunday killing of Indonesian priest Fr. Franciskus Madhu, SVD, in Kalinga, Catholic bishop Prudencio Andaya wondered: "Perhaps, we've been too silent for a long time, afraid to speak out against all killings in the past that we tolerated more killings to happen!"

A culture of impunity—where traitor, abductor or torturer go free—does not emerge full-blown overnight. It builds up incrementally, stoked by official support, tolerance and silence. "A man begins to die the moment he remains silent about things that matter," Martin Luther King warned.

The Philippines waffled on who collaborated with World War II Japanese occupiers, historian Frank Golay notes. This blurred the difference between Quislings and resistance fighters.

Under Marcos' dictatorship, the Philippines "became a gulag of safe houses where members of the Armed Forces ... were responsible for acts of unusual brutality," torturing over 35,000 men and women, Amnesty International noted. But those who tortured and salvaged bluffed and threatened their way into first de facto, then legalized, impunity.

"Policemen and soldiers who tortured and salvaged are still among us," sociologist John Carroll, S.J. noted in his 2002 paper, "A Nation in Denial." Some were elected to national office. Little has been done to "uncover the facts, give the nameless dead their true names and decent burials," much less identify and prosecute perpetrators. "Unless the nation rises to vindicate its common conscience, it may be condemned to wander forever in the wilderness of valueless power plays among the elite."

That has come to pass in today's generation of abductors and killers, whether as vigilantes in Cebu City, rogue military bands or communist executioners.

South Africa's truth commission sought confession to shape collective memory. Greece prosecuted torturers as "national catharsis." Guatemala, where 100,000 were salvaged, launched a project to "recover historic memory."

By contrast, "the Philippines stretched impunity to its limits ... by trying to forget its authoritarian past," writes Alfred McCoy in "Closer than Brothers" (Yale University). "This evasion transformed torturers into heroes ... Remembering became stigmatized as subversive ... and politics emerged with the lingering paralysis of collective trauma."

Do parents of our desaparecidos foreshadow a Philippine version of Argentinian mothers who turned Plaza de Mayo into a worldwide scream of protest against the abduction of their children?

Perhaps not—for the moment. In eight years, 30,000 individuals disappeared in Argentina. We've not reached the grim benchmark that the INQUIRER's Michael Tan recalled: chiquitos desaparecidos: children given away, once their "disappeared" mothers, who gave birth in detention centers, were salvaged.

But the perception spreads that to survive politically, this regime would not think twice to expand today's impunity. How wretched the country where tenure of public office compels mothers, like Edith Burgos, to say: "I will continue searching for my son."

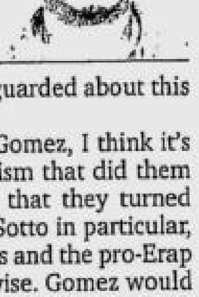
"*Donde estas*, Roger? *Donde estan*? [Where are you, Roger? Where are they?]" cried Elvia Cristina de Gonzales of Honduras, in a poem written after her 24-year-old son disappeared. In today's Philippines, even "the stones cry out" the same question.

* * *

E-mail: juanlmercado@gmail.com

Shafts of light

THERE'S THE RUB



Conrado de Quiros

THERE ARE SOME MORE SHAFTS OF LIGHT amid the gloom that was this election, one that as in Marcos' time saw the Comelec as the disease rather than the cure.

For one, we won't be calling Virgilio Garcillano "Honorable." He has conceded defeat to Malou Acosta in Bukidnon. For a while there, I thought he really had a crack at the House, the TV reports showing his campaign sorties to be faring well. I did wonder if Bukidnon might not be another case of Filipino voters displaying tribal mentality and saying "he might be an SOB, but he's our SOB." But truly wondrously, like Pampanga, they've done no such thing. Instead, they've said, "*Bukid man ini, pero matino kami.*" Or "provincial ain't dumb."

Elsewhere, in South Cotabato, Manny Pacquiao has been, as the reports universally put it, TKOed by Darlene Antonino-Custodio. I remember that during Pacquiao's fight with Jorge Solis last month, the announcers could barely conceal their merriment at the thought that what was riding on that fight wasn't just Pacquiao's present career in the boxing ring but his future one in the other ring called politics. The fight, the announcers remarked with much suppressed laughter, was Pacquiao's campaign pitch. If he lost that fight, he might as well kiss his hopes of becoming a Filipino congressman goodbye.

Well, as it turned out, and quite happily so, it wasn't just Solis that stood in the way of his getting to be called "Honorable" too. Nor was it just his opponent. The voters were too. In the end, they proved to be Pacquiao's unbeatable foe in the extravaganza that might have been billed as "Bato sa Bato in Cotabato." The voters of South Cotabato knocked him out, and hopefully knocked some sense into him.

So, have the voters grown up? Or, a variation on the theme, have the entertainers lost their electoral glitter?

Many of my friends say yes to both. In particular they've pointed to the very poor showing of the three senatorial candidates associated with entertainment: Tito Sotto, Richard Gomez and Cesar Montano.

I myself am a little more guarded about this development.

In the case of Sotto and Gomez, I think it's more than just public cynicism that did them in. It's also the perception that they turned against their former camp. Sotto in particular, whom both the Edsa II forces and the pro-Erap opposition derided in that wise. Gomez would run as an independent, but not before first throwing his lot with the NPC, an administration ally, thereby drawing scathing attacks from his enemies about disloyalty. Though the furor burned out quickly, he didn't escape unhurt. My friends in the survey outfits corroborate this: Perceptions of turncoatism, real or imagined, had a negative effect on candidates.

But the case of Montano and Victor Wood and Pacquiao would certainly suggest that entertainers per se (Vilma Santos, like Erap, rose from the political ranks) are no longer a shoo-in in Philippine elections, national or local. My own explanation for this is that the unrelenting opprobrium heaped on them by pretty nearly all the traditional sources of authority in this country—the Church, business, the NGOs, the media—has finally taken its toll. That was how it was too with the *trapos* in the 1990s. The term "*trapo*" became a virtual kiss of death, particularly for those to whom it stuck like a leech. Its most prominent victim was of course Ramon Mitra. Speaker of the House and would-be next president, he lost badly in 1992 from being perceived as a quintessential one. Ramos projected himself then as a non-*trapo*, if not anti-*trapo*, harping on his role at Edsa to drive home the point. He won.

It was the *trapos'* turn then, it is the entertainers' turn now. But there's a downside to this. It is that the *trapos* and the entertainers have not disappeared one after the other. It is that the entertainers' loss has been the *trapos'* gain. The *trapos* have been making a comeback since 2004, riding on the crest of growing public disenchantment with entertainers, if not indeed actively generating the disenchantment themselves. I've repeatedly warned against this, especially shortly after the 2004 elections, when many observers agreed with the GMA camp's pronouncements that GMA's victory spelled the end of the spell of entertainers. As it turned out, of course, news of her victory, like Mark Twain's death, were grossly exaggerated. What GMA's seizure of power in fact represented was the revenge of the *trapos*. No longer would they be content to make way for entertainers—if they had to steal the vote to stop them.

Something else has replaced popularity and machinery as the most decisive element in national elections. That is cheating. Done, like murder, with utter impunity.

Look at the Congress of Jose de Venecia, especially the bullying that went with the killing of the impeachment bids and the resurrection of the Cha-cha, and see if entertainers are our problem today. The good news is that the entertainers are going, if not gone. The bad news is that the *trapos* are back, and thriving.

There is, however, one very thin shaft of light there too. That is that at least the *trapos* closely linked to GMA are getting a beating—barring a sudden recovery over the next few days along the lines of the Maguindanao operation. Chavit Singson, Mike Defensor and Prospero Pichay are rotting by the wayside, the last up until recently when he shot up in the Comelec count, courtesy of Benjamin Abalos. In this country, we have voters and we have counters, and ne'er the twain shall meet.

What can I say? Like I said, the good news is that the entertainers are doing badly. The bad news is that the entertainers are not really the problem.

Datumanong on Maguindanao vote

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

I HAD A BRIEF CONVERSATION WITH REP. Simeon Datumanong of Maguindanao by phone over the weekend, during which I queried him about the 12-0 victory that Team Unity was reported to have scored in his province. I told him that this news was received with a good deal of skepticism owing to the fact that the results departed from the "trend" in media counts as well as the count of Namfrel and Comelec, where the Genuine Opposition dominates. There are queries as to whether elections were really held in Maguindanao.

Datumanong, who became nationally known as the cool chair of the House justice committee through which passed the two impeachment moves against President Macapagal-Arroyo, said with a laugh: "Of course we had the elections here. In fact, my wife and I voted in the same precinct we always voted in."

* * *

He said that a 12-0 victory for TU shouldn't be surprising for a number of reasons. One is that the administration coalition has cornered all elective posts in the province, from governor down to the last councilor, and in 20 out of 22 municipalities, the opposition had no candidates. He stressed that there was absolutely no clear leader who took charge of the opposition's campaign in Maguindanao and their candidates never showed up there, whereas TU candidates and the local leaders supporting the administration worked very hard to ensure their victory. He also stressed that the Maguindanaoans' overwhelming support for the administration shouldn't be surprising since the people are quite happy now that the economy is moving forward, especially in the agriculture sector, and the peace and order condition has been stable in the past few years.

* * *

I queried Datumanong about the charge that no electoral returns have been released from his province, or that Namfrel people have not been allowed to get the sixth copy of the election returns, and he said this issue should be tossed to the Comelec. My own personal feeling is that it's entirely possible, given the feudal style in Muslim Mindanao over decades, to believe the allegation of the unnamed teacher in the INQUIRER that ballots were filled up outside the precincts on orders of some overzealous local political leaders, and the Comelec ought to look into it. But it's also possible that the province went really big for the administration coalition for the reasons stated by Datumanong. What the Comelec ought to do is to start the canvass of Maguindanao votes right away, and do what has to be done with what may look spurious, if only to calm down the mounting tension.

I also checked this story out with Lakas stalwart Ray Roquero and his initial reaction was to wryly point out that the opposition is raising a big fuss about the TU sweep in Maguindanao, three towns in Eastern Samar and select places in Luzon, such as in Isabela, but it has not commented on the 12-0 sweep for GO in Navotas.

* * *

I'm glad Comelec Commissioner Rene Sarmiento proposed that the Comelec look into the regularity of the so-called "failed elections" in parts of Muslim Mindanao, such as some areas in Lanao del Sur, Sulu and Basilan, where new elections have been scheduled for this Friday. It seems that Sarmiento, who's the commissioner in charge of Muslim Mindanao, has become alarmed that the "failure of elections" in those areas every election could be directly related to the longtime practice of unscrupulous groups in the area to sell results that affect senatorial candidates from the 10th to the 15th slots to the highest bidder. There is definitely a need to investigate this phenomenon.

* * *

Some foreign observers were quite harsh in their judgment of the conduct of the elections, which they said was "violent, dirty and chaotic." I heard an Australian observer over Australian TV expressing shock at the heavy military presence in certain areas or around some politicians. The problem, however, is that many of these foreign observers came from Western countries such as Sweden where elections assume such a different style and politics is far less colorful than in many Third World countries. In the Western countries, many voters are almost apathetic (except in the recent presidential elections in France where the voter turnout was the highest in 40 years). The foreign monitors' hysterical denunciation presents a contrast to the view of most foreign diplomats based here, who are able to put the developments in a historical and political context. As French Ambassador Gerard Chesnel put it to me recently, "We who live here know the real score."

It must be noted that members of the opposition group Black & White Movement were the ones that shepherded the foreign monitors around. Recall that Robert Broadfoot, general manager of PERC, came out recently to denounce certain groups for wrongly portraying PERC as having pinpointed RP as the "most corrupt" in Asia. He lamented that the truth was twisted by some groups for their own agenda. One of those groups peddling this line was the B &W Movement. Thus, it's easy to imagine how it could twist things to the foreign monitors.

* * *

Over the years I've helped Retrouvaille with publicity in its much needed apostolate in these times, when marriage and the family are under grave threat. The Retrouvaille style is to reestablish friendly, courteous and caring communication between husband and wife through live-in weekends, where they are helped to rebuild hope and trust and overcome negative feelings such as anger, guilt and unforgivingness, and shift focus from themselves to the needs of their partner. Retrouvaille is offering another such live-in weekend on June 1-3 in Tagaytay City. Inquiries, which will be held in strict confidence, may be made to Ruby, 931-8313 and 0918-923-2973; Nes and Inday, 938-9719 or 0916-443-8346; or Neomi, 681-5746 or 0916-395-4642.

Eyewitness to cheating

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

CHEATING AT THE PRECINCT LEVEL, REINforced by dirty tricks during the counting and canvassing, seems to have become so common that we're no longer shocked by them.

When adverse reports come from Mindanao, especially the ARMM provinces, we shrug our shoulders and say, well, what else is new? As I have written previously, "everybody" seems to know about the shenanigans going on in Mindanao, but "everybody" seems reluctant to do anything about them. The prevailing thinking appears to be that while there are lots of anecdotes on the extent and level of cheating that's going on there, no one would be willing to testify or even submit testimony on what exactly transpires in these areas during elections.

Recently, I received via e-mail an eyewitness account of the cheating being carried out in Indanan, Sulu, written by a lawyer-friend who was one of a very few volunteers willing to brave the distance and isolation—and prevailing electoral "culture"—to help protect the vote in these seemingly "hopeless" areas.

But should we indeed consign Sulu, Basilan, the two Lanao provinces and Maguindanao as basket cases where elections are a farce and fake votes are manufactured to be sold to the highest bidder? Only if we turn a blind eye and deaf ear to what's going on, and only if the Comelec insists on "business as usual" in these areas. The only "reflection" I can add to my friend's account is that no wonder our Muslim brothers and sisters feel disenfranchised from the rest of the Republic. With elections rendered meaningless to them, then no wonder they feel no connection whatsoever to the national government—and to the rest of the nation, as well.

Here's my friend's account, edited only to protect her identity.

* * *

"I am now in Jolo, using the Internet [connection] of _______ college...

"This morning, after voting in Jolo where I am registered, I visited a cluster of precincts in Barangay Pasil, municipality of Indanan, Sulu. *Grabe*... I was really taken aback by the massive cheating in the area. Earlier that day, a voter had been shot dead by a policeman who refused the voter entrance to the precinct.

"When I arrived, many of the rooms where the precincts were conducting business were closed, with a military guard right outside the door. When I tried to get in, I was told by the military that I could not, even if I showed him my [canvassing] ID. I peeped in and saw that there were people inside. I tried my luck in another building. I was able to get in and I was shocked to see the BEIs writing on the ballots which had already been thumb-marked. They were writing the same list of candidates on each of the ballots. A man with a bolo was also near the BEI. A ballot box was open (without padlock) while ballots were being placed inside it.

"I saw the same thing (BEI writing on the ballots) being done in two precincts stationed on a stage (it is a school campus). When the BEI and other people around them realized that I was watching them, they whispered to each other but continued their task. When I left, someone approached me and asked me what I was doing. I told him I'm a watcher, and showed him my IDs.

"PPCRV/CCARE were there, but there was so much fear in there that I could not blame the watchers if they did nothing. The son of the politician whose name was being written on those ballots was present in the vicinity and was going around the school rooms.

"I left for another school, also in Indanan. While BEIs were not writing on the ballots, there was also massive cheating. Other people were 'assisting' the voters. There was no vote secrecy and voters, watchers and 'other people' were mingling in the rooms.

"I was told that there were other areas where massive cheating also happened but I did not have the opportunity to visit other municipalities.

"Counting will be centralized in Jolo. I am sure there will be other ways of cheating that I will see in the counting...

"*Yun lang*... makes me reflect that election does not work here. Will have to reflect on this some more."

* * *

WHEN, in reaction to the many reports of poll-related violence and poll fraud in the last elections, the President smilingly claims victory and says her administration was "vindicated" by the overwhelming victory of administration candidates at the local level, was she consciously referring to elections in such places as Indanan?

When Team Unity managed to harvest a 12-0 vote in Maguindanao, with the high-spending Chavit Singson wangling a No. 1 slot despite his miserable showing elsewhere, the TU spokesman boasted of their machinery and hemmed and hawed about the way votes are cast by "consensus" in the province.

Wasn't he even concerned about the raised eyebrows everywhere and the impression created—that the government tolerates cheating as long as it favors it?

I believe that if authorities start from this eyewitness account, they will have plenty already to go on, and can file charges against the erring officials and teachers in Indanan and other areas.

It may seem futile to target the cheating-prone areas in the effort to clean up our elections. But the assumption every election year that votes can and will be manipulated in these predominantly Muslim areas I feel insults Muslim Filipinos and turns officialdom, especially the Comelec, complicit in the further estrangement of Muslim Filipinos.

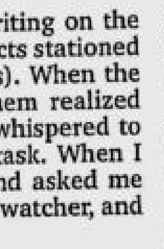
The answer to the simmering rebellion is not warfare or arms but greater integration and participation. But this won't materialize until we assure the clean and orderly conduct of the most basic civic duty: voting our choices into office.

For this is what cheating at the polls does: It renders our votes meaningless, and makes us lesser citizens, with no voice, no choice, no power.

Tony Blair's poisoned legacy

WORLD VIEW

Ian Davidson



TONY BLAIR HAS A POWERFUL CLAIM TO being one of the most successful British politicians of any recent generation, at least in domestic economic and social policy. But history will remember him mainly for his strategic error in going to war in Iraq.

During his 10 years in power, Blair and his Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown, gave Britain one of the longest periods of economic stability, relatively high growth, and low unemployment that it had ever known. In this respect, Blair's premiership marked a fundamental break with the Labor Party's tax-and-spend tradition. It also established a new tradition of stability in economic policy, continuing and reinforcing the previous Conservative government's commitment to fiscal discipline and low inflation. Stable economic policy and rapid growth, in turn, enabled Blair's government to pour extra money into education and the National Health Service.

Yet Blair's domestic legacy is a mood of disillusion and mistrust, especially of Blair himself. One reason is that a significant portion of Blair's party (which he renamed "New Labor") never reconciled itself to the primacy that he gave to free-market principles over its old Socialist or Social Democratic values. Another is that Blair consistently seemed to pay much less attention to Parliament than to the Right-wing tabloid press: the spin and media manipulation to which his office devoted so much effort worked wonders at first, but soon generated deep skepticism and mistrust.

But the main reason for Britain's popular disillusion with Blair comes down to his role in the Iraq war, which was launched with the ostensible aim of preempting Iraq's use of weapons of mass destruction. Of course, as we now know, WMD were never found and, worse, evidence came to light showing that Blair was aware that the Bush administration was committed to regime change, regardless of their existence. The infamous Downing Street memorandum of July 23, 2002, eight months before the outbreak of war, stated explicitly that "The intelligence and the facts were being fixed around the policy."

In short, when Blair took Britain to war, he deliberately misled Parliament and the electorate about the ostensible rationale for it. When no WMD were found, Blair fell back on the previously unavowed justification that the removal of Saddam Hussein was the "right thing to do."

Unfortunately, the Bush administration did not foresee that Saddam's removal would precipitate a multi-sided insurgency and civil war. These dangers were predictable, and the world now knows that the war has proved a terrible failure of American strategy, and may yet have even more catastrophic consequences.

So why did Blair support it? Part of the answer goes back to Blair's first big foreign-policy adventure, Nato's intervention in Kosovo in 1999.

In 1998-1999 Serbia had embarked on violent repression of Kosovo's ethnic Albanian majority, driving roughly 400,000 Kosovars from their homes. Diplomatic efforts by the outside world proved ineffective, so in March 1999, Nato began a 78-day bombing campaign against the Serbs. Blair was at the forefront among Western leaders in pressing for Nato action, and to justify this innovation in outside intervention he proclaimed "a new doctrine of international community" that made it a "just war," because it was based on superior Western values.

One of Blair's character flaws is self-righteousness, an excessive confidence—perhaps an extrapolation of his Christian faith—that he knows what is correct, and is therefore entitled to act accordingly. In the case of the Iraq war, Blair has never conceded that the war was mistaken in conception or disastrous in practice: for him, it was still "the right thing to do."

Blair leaves office before the full consequences of the Iraq war have been played out. There is no sign of an end to the sectarian violence, and little prospect that Iraq can become a peaceful, unitary democracy. Moreover, the convulsions in Iraq may well have incalculable repercussions throughout the Middle East.

One consequence, from a British perspective, is that it is now virtually impossible to imagine that any future prime minister could engage in another big military adventure primarily out of loyalty to an American president. Indeed, it is possible that Blair, through his complicity in the Iraq war, has inflicted major damage on the very idea of a "special relationship" between Britain and the United States. This relationship was always more special for the British than for the Americans, who scarcely recognize its existence. But if it has now been discredited in the minds of the British people, the result may be a new element of independence in British strategic thinking.

Another consequence is that Britain's moral standing has been damaged alongside that of the United States. But the damage to America's moral position is more serious for the health of the world. It is uncertain whether Tony Blair could have dissuaded George Bush from waging war in Iraq. Nevertheless, by enthusiastically backing Bush's war, his legacy will forever remain deeply compromised. ***Project Syndicate***

Ian Davidson is an adviser to, and a columnist for, the European Policy Center in Brussels. A former columnist for the Financial Times, his most recent book is "Voltaire in Exile."

'Anak'

YOUNG BLOOD

Gail Chiara Quiban

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.**

IT'S 4 A.M. PERTURBED AND MORE THAN MOVED BY "Anak," which I happened to catch on cable (on a Japanese channel, yet), I find myself unable to sleep. The movie, I had actually already seen before—in college, perhaps—though at that time, it impressed me as just another over-the-top melodrama. This accidental second viewing, however, left me sniffling, and quivering. Its emotion-laden plot, which I thought was its weakness, I now see as its richness.

The grinding economic conditions forcing Filipinos to work in foreign lands just to earn a decent, living wage; their children left behind growing up feeling abandoned; the trials and tribulations of long-distance motherhood—these are some of the heartrending facets of the life of an overseas Filipino worker that the film explores.

I can only imagine what life must be like for OFWs, away from their loved ones for years; at worst, enduring abusive employers just so they can send money back home and feed their families; only to come home and be met with resentment by their very own kids.

I can't help but be reminded of those times when I was much younger: My dad was almost always away from home. Every time he would "visit" us, my *Kuya* and I didn't feel in our hearts that he was our father. He was just Santa Claus, bringing us wonderful gifts and big toys; then after a flurry of treats and freebies, he would be gone again before we knew it. "Father" was simply a title, a designation, a formality.

We realized Dad wasn't Santa Claus when he finally "settled" with us. That was when we also found out he is a tough man—owing to his military training. This realization surprised and scared us at first, and I reacted like the resentful ingrate in the movie.

So did my *Kuya*. He only saw a father who abandoned his family and who was a very strict disciplinarian. My *Kuya* never really appreciated that the tuition for the many courses he pursued and switched to, his clothes, the food on our table, the roof over our heads, were all Dad's work, as were the money paid for our water and electricity bills, the computers, cell phones, cars and other luxuries.

My mom would always try to patch things up. "Your father is a good man. He may be a bit hard, a bit strict, but he has a good heart," she would tell us, reminding us as well that despite his having been away from us, he remained faithful to our family.

How he could tolerate his children's ingratitude and still get up every morning to go to work to spare us the pangs of poverty, is a mystery that can only be explained by his strong character. My father is a good man. Eventually, I came to appreciate how he takes good care of us and tries to be the best father the only way he knows how. He may appear distant, but he has provided well for us and it's because of him that my family and I enjoy a comfortable life.

About a year ago, my brother and his girlfriend became parents to a baby girl. I had hoped that after the birth of his daughter, *Kuya* would realize that it was imperative for him to straighten out his life, if only for his baby's sake; and to work hard and make something of himself if he must give his daughter the life he wants for her. I had also hoped that he would also realize what it must have been like for our father to provide for our family.

Kuya is now in America to try his luck there. I'm still hoping all these for him.

Gail Chiara Quiban, 22, is an AB Communications graduate from Ateneo de Manila and an incoming graduate student of Global Politics at the same school.

'Madaraka'

Cherry Mae F. Lagare

I MUST ADMIT THAT MY MOTHER AND I ONLY GOT TO be "close" to each other when I was in college; maybe because, somehow, I finally understood why she was so strict with us. And I came to understand that she had to be away from home to work, even in the wee hours of the morning, to provide us with our needs, most especially, education.

In my younger days, our relationship was sort of distant. Her voice scared me like booming thunder. I guess, back then, I just had no idea about the reasons for all her "impatience." But looking back, I am very thankful that she "pulled us through life." I am proud to say, I am a better person—independent, strong, appreciative of life—because of her.

These past years, I've been sharing my thoughts, my frustrations and dreams with my mother more and more. For her part, she would tell me about how difficult her childhood years were and how she worked hard to spare her children the same experience. Now, she can choose to enjoy herself; but she always has something to share with her less fortunate brothers, sisters, nephews and nieces, even neighbors. Even if it means incurring debts, she never hesitates to help. My mother is very generous, not only with material things but also with her love and care. She's always a ready helping hand.

"Madaraka" (as I fondly call her) is not the typical saintly mother. She looks tough but, deep inside, she has a very good heart. When my father was confined in the hospital and lay unconscious for days—relying only on prayers and very strong drugs to keep breathing—she devoted her time taking care of him. She didn't care how much money we had to borrow for his medication; she didn't mind that her business had to suffer. My father's health was all she cared about. When my father regained consciousness, she never showed him any sign that she was physically and emotionally exhausted, although at times I would hear her sobbing in the bathroom. My father would be hospitalized several more times (in 1995), but my mom never failed to show her love for him even as she took care of us, her children.

Now, away from her for months, I always long for her company: the food she prepares, our food trips to Eatworks, the bingo games we play together, and many more. I miss her so much and I know she misses me too.

She recently celebrated her 57th birthday, and with the help of a friend, I gave her a "surprise." I was talking to her via the Internet when it arrived; I heard my mama sob like a child. "I hate you, you made me cry," she said, but I couldn't be happier for I knew her tears were of joy and longing. It was her first time to have balloons on her birthday, she admitted. And I, too, was overwhelmed with joy and excitement as if it were my birthday. Somehow, I made her feel I'm always with her even when we're apart, and that's what I always want her to feel.

Like any other mother, she isn't perfect but I can't ask for more. To me, she's a hero, someone I will always look up to for the rest of my life.

Indeed, it is redundant to describe a mother as a "working mother."

Thank you, Madaraka.

Cherry Mae F. Lagare, 28, works for Camei Stationery Co.

Helpless Abalos is no Guy

IT WAS EXASPERATING TO HEAR COMmission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos express his helplessness in stopping election-related violence in Abra.

But all he needed there was political will, plus the patented Magsaysay no-nonsense to-hell-with-niceties-attitude, and above all, a little common sense. All he had to do was cancel all the gun permits—absolutely all—issued to all the candidates and bodyguards; replace the entire police and military forces in Abra with troops handpicked and headed by new PMA graduates who didn't have anything to do with Abra, or had no relatives and in-laws in or from Abra and, preferably, were from the Visayas or Mindanao or from the Tagalog and Bicol areas. Without guns or bodyguards, the violence-prone candidates would have been the first to flee the province. (All these are within his powers as Comelec chair.)

Thus, Abalos would have been able to get rid of the root of the problem. Then only the candidates with no violent inclinations would have been elected peacefully to office.

Abalos could have applied the same formula in all other troubled provinces. Abalos, who prides himself on being a former golf caddy, was in a unique position to clean up Philippine elections in the provinces—never mind the national contests—and sweep away violent provincial dynasties from power, thus rendering an invaluable service to the Filipino people, if only to redeem himself from the ignominy of his failed computerization program.

Abalos can make a name for himself and step out from President Macapagal-Arroyo's shadow to do something really heroic and revolutionary for his country and for his grandchildren to be proud of him once again. He can sweep away the country's violent political dynasties. Magsaysay would have done it. But, of course, Abalos is no Magsaysay. Or, can Abalos do a Magsaysay?

—ENRIQUE ANGELES,
enrieangeles@yahoo.com

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Dubious, unrepresentative party-list groups

I AM OF THE BELIEF THAT THE FUNDAmental purpose of the party-list system is to give the marginalized sectors representation in Congress—as a way of balancing the elite's control of the legislature. But the Commission on Elections seems to have set this objective aside by accrediting government-backed party-list groups, thus allowing unsavory individuals a backdoor entry into the House of Representatives.

Some groups have even turned the party-list system into a "gene-pool," their nomination process practically turned into a family affair. I can only hope that their "bias" for the marginalized sector runs in the blood.

So much for the "it's-the-party-not-the-person-whom-you-are-voting-for" mantra: essentially, it's still the nominee who gets into Congress to represent the least of our countrymen. This is reason enough for us to bear in mind what these party-list groups stand for. I am glad that the Comelec has finally decided to disclose the names of the nominees.

We, advocates of the causes of indigenous and Moro peoples, are distraught that groups with no clear advocacy for the Moro/Muslim peoples are getting seats in legislature on their behalf. Very few of these groups can rightfully claim that they have a long record of organizing work in Moro communities, or of continuing struggle against the wars of aggression that beset the Moro peoples in Mindanao.

We doubt if they have reached out to the indigenous peoples in the hinterlands and if they know their struggles. Only one party-list group openly condemned the military operations in Sulu; and we did not get any support when the indigenous people of the Sierra Madre protested against the construction of the Laiban Dam.

If these party lists are silent or blasé when it comes to issues that confront the marginalized sectors they claim to represent, how would they speak for their constituents? It seems that these party lists actively relate with "their" sectors only when they are wooing the members for votes.

—ROSHELL ALLAGA,
Kabataan para sa Tribung Pilipino
(Katribu), c/o rga_matcha@yahoo.com

CSC on 'slow' response

MAY WE REFER TO THE LETTER OF CARMElita Diaz titled "Slow and late response from CSC" (INQUIRER, 5/17/07) wherein she took to task the Civil Service Commission for the "excruciatingly long wait" she had to go through regarding her request for extension of service. Allow us to clarify certain points in what she deemed as a "cruel ordeal."

The CSC allows state employees who reach the retirement age of 65 years to extend their government service. Diaz's request was received on July 28, 2005. In a series of communications, she was asked to submit certain documents and provide additional details. She was only able to fully comply with the requirements after six months or on January 2006.

Nonetheless, the CSC approved her first request for a six-month extension through a resolution issued on Feb. 22, 2006. This resolution allowed her to extend her services from Jan. 31 to July 30, 2006. Clearly, had she immediately submitted the needed documents, the CSC would have acted on her request sooner. Diaz requested for a second extension of service through a letter dated May 11, 2006 which was received by the CSC on May 23, 2006. Her request was denied on July 18, 2006.

On Aug. 17, 2006, the CSC received her Motion for Reconsideration. That motion however, had become moot and academic because the commission, having previously denied her second request for extension, had deemed her retired as of July 30, 2006.

We do not claim to have perfect systems and procedures; actions on requests can be facilitated though if clients complete half the transaction picture by submitting, on time, all the requirements. Subjecting clients to an ordeal would be the last thing on our mind.

—KARINA CONSTANTINO DAVID,
chair, Civil Service Commission,
Constitution Hills,
Batasan Pambansa Complex,
Diliman, Quezon City

Victims of dirty politics

I PERSONALLY AGREE WITH EVERYTHING Ceres Doyo said about Nellie Banaag and Leticia Ramos. ("A teacher, a sheltering tree," INQUIRER, 5/17/97)

As a retired public school teacher, I have full faith in all the teachers who serve, with extraordinary patience, to help uphold the integrity of our elections. I, too, served as a BEI (Board of Election Inspectors) member, and thus also suffered hunger, faced political pressure and battled fear in many past elections. It is sad that we teachers always end up being the victims of dirty politics.

So personally I'm extending my deepest sympathy to the families of these two heroes. And I hope that the Philippine Public School Teachers Association would stand up and defend its members, especially during elections. Teachers should not be forced to render service on election day.

Leaders of teachers' groups, what can we do about this issue?

—TERESITA NOBLESALA,
terealo@yahoo.com.ph

Paging CHED, DFA

I'M FROM THE PROVINCE, SPECIFICALLY from Iligan City, Lanao del Norte. That's in Mindanao, as if you didn't know. Last May 2, we went to Manila because my daughter was going to Dubai and she needed to have her diploma authenticated by Malacañang. But in Malacañang, we were told that the responsibility for authenticating documents needed for foreign travels had been transferred to the Department of Foreign Affairs.

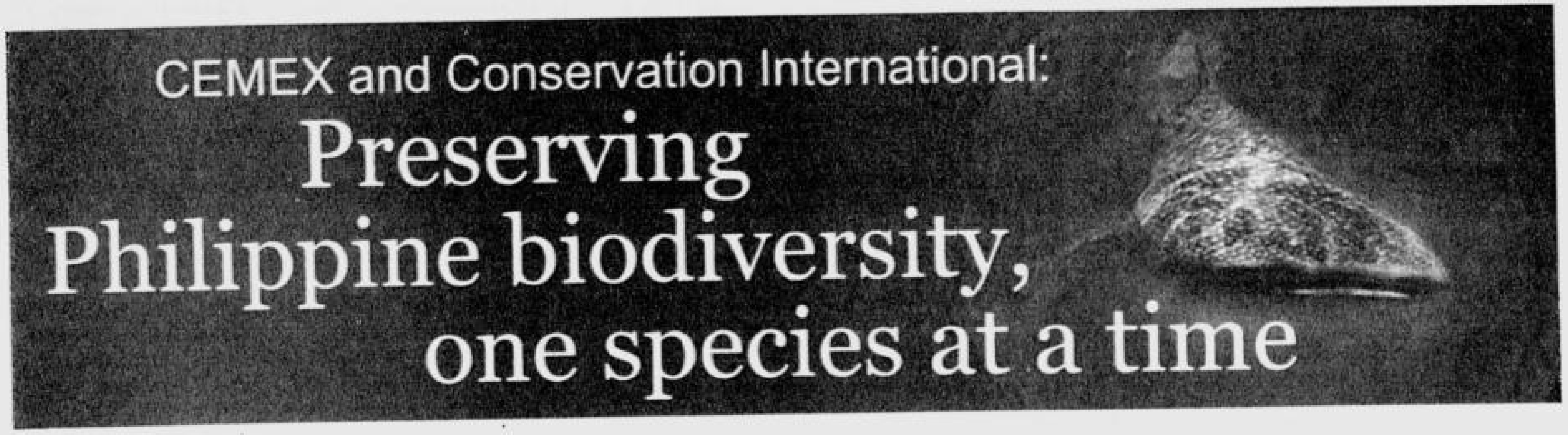
We immediately proceeded to the DFA so as not to waste time. There we saw a horde waiting for their papers. The guards were ill-mannered. We went through the process and waited till the office closed for the day. Some were advised to "come back" the following day; others on a specific date.

We were back the next day. We were told that our papers had been sent to the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) which was "slow"—we were further told—in returning the papers to the DFA.

We called the CHED which referred us to the regional office. We called the regional office for confirmation and we were told it was not with them.

Ano ba talaga? Where do we go from here?

—LITA YU FERNANDEZ,
38 J. Luna St., Iligan City



CEMEX and Conservation International:

Preserving Philippine biodiversity, one species at a time

"Galapagos times 10" is the term used to describe the richness of Philippine ecology. Generally considered as the "hottest" hotspot in biodiversity, we have more than 20,000 endemic species calling our patchwork of islands home.

Sheltering under the canopy of our vast rainforests and frolicking in our waters are some of the world's most unique creatures – the Philippine mouse deer, the world's smallest hoofed mammal; the Palawan peacock pheasant, widely considered to be the most beautiful of the peacock species; the Philippine Eagle, one of the rarest eagles in the world; the whale shark or *butanding*, the world's largest fish and a host of others.

Philippine Eagle
©DENR-Region 2

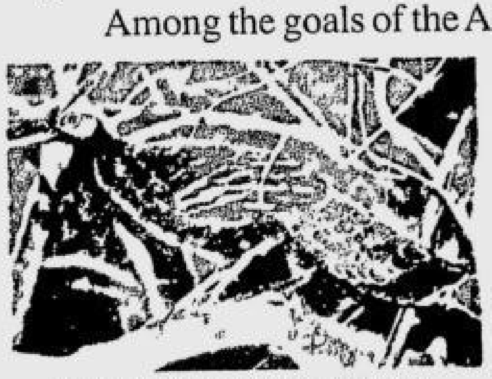
Tamaraw
©Josef Suchomel

But with rampant deforestation, habitat loss and growing population pressure, many of these species are in peril with nearly 500 species listed in the red list of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) for 2006 (www.redlist.org). Conservationists fear that without immediate intervention, the Philippine hotspot is on the brink of an extinction crisis that would devastate our incredible natural wealth.

CEMEX
Adopt-A-Species

Sierra Madre Forest Frog
©Mariano Roy Duya

Today, CEMEX Philippines Foundation takes action to help safeguard these endangered species. In partnership with Conservation International (CI), CEMEX is launching its Adopt-A-Species program, a long term conservation plan that will provide a framework to engage the private sector, local communities and even individuals in efforts to protect these species and their habitats. CI is a worldwide champion of biological diversity and CI Philippines is fighting on all fronts for the benefit of future life in our glorious archipelago.



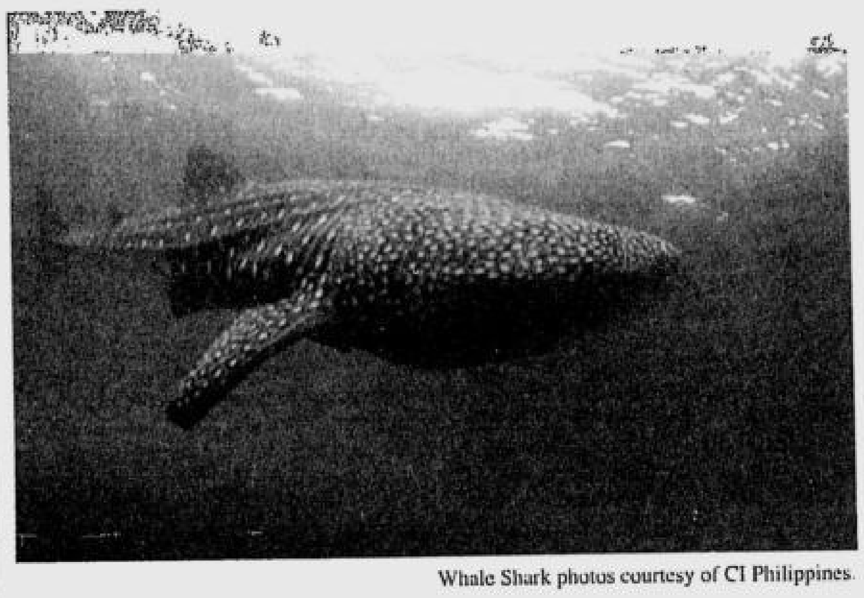
Palawan peacock pheasant ©Todd Katzner

Balabac mousedeer ©Palawan Council for Sustainable Development

Among the goals of the Adopt-A-Species program are the determination of priority species in need of protection based on the IUCN red list and developing financial and operational mechanisms that will allow any company or individual to adopt threatened species in the Philippines. It also aims to pass legislation on Wildlife Conservation that will provide incentives for individuals and companies to encourage them to get involved in species conservation.

Donsol, Sorsogon

Whale Shark Sanctuary



Whale Shark photos courtesy of CI Philippines.

CEMEX kicks off its Adopt-A-Species program by adopting the whale shark.

A small fishing town in Sorsogon actually plays host to the annual visitations of the largest fish in the world. Off the coast of Donsol, swimming in its clear waters from November to May, come large groups of the gentle and playful whale sharks, known to locals as *butanding*.

Contrary to the fierce image of sharks in Jaws, the *butanding* are docile and playful creatures. Between 15 and 40 feet in length and weighing about 20 tons, they are easily recognized for their broad head and the profusion of silvery polka dots along its body. Incapable of biting and chewing, they suck in water with prey, and feed on plankton and krill.

A group of Filipino divers documented the sighting of the whale sharks in the waters of Poso, the southernmost barangay of Donsol on 1998 and since then, tourists have begun flocking to Donsol for the chance to spot and even swim with these gentle giants of the deep.

But earlier interactions between whale sharks and people have been less friendly. For many years, fishermen have been hunting the *butanding* to supply the high demand for its meat and medicinal by-products in other Asian countries, where it is considered a delicacy and an aphrodisiac.

This led to the steady decline in the population of *butanding* in the country and alarmed by the problem, the Philippine government declared the whale shark as an endangered species in 1998, banning its plunder and exploitation.

The booming eco-tourism industry has also helped to protect this unique creature. For the nature enthusiast, swimming with the whale shark can be a once-in-a-lifetime experience - an experience CEMEX and CI would like to preserve for many years to come.

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Top poll lawyers to protect priest gov

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—FOUR OF THE country's top election lawyers and 33 more counsels are forming a "strong defense wall" against suits seeking to unseat Pampanga governor-elect, Fr. Eddie Panlilio.

"We will see him through. The four of us are, as always, ready like his lawyers in Pampanga," Romulo Macalintal told the INQUIRER by phone on Monday, referring to his colleagues Sixto Brillantes, Pete Quadra and Leila de Lima and the local team led by Dante David and Ernesto Francisco.

"We will support him to the end, free him of whatever legal obstacles that may come his way so the Kapampangan don't only enjoy the honor of electing a good man but also be able to start reaping the benefits of Governor Panlilio's brand of new politics," Macalintal said.

Like in the last 45 days and during the canvassing period, he said they would continue to render free services for Panlilio, the first Catholic priest to be elected in Pampanga, the home province of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"We continue to believe in his integrity," Macalintal said, adding they were continuing the volunteer work "out of moral obligation."

Panlilio, 53, ran on the clamor of the Catholic laity wanting to have an alternative against Ms Arroyo's allies—Board Member Lilia Pineda, wife of suspected jueteng lord Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda, and incumbent Gov. Mark Lapid, son of Sen. Manuel "Lito" Lapid who had been linked to the alleged quarry scam.

Without the backing of a political party or endorsement from the Roman Catholic Church, Panlilio relied only on volunteers and private donations mostly from local traders and overseas Kapampangan.

He won by only 1,147 votes against Pineda who, on the clamor of 16 of 21 mayors, sought to end the Lapid era in Pampanga politics and the alleged corruption and poor governance that came with it.

Commenting on one of two pending cases against Panlilio, Macalintal said the disqualification case filed by losing gubernatorial bet Elly Pamatong should be "dismissed immediately" because this had become moot and academic when the priest was proclaimed on Friday night.

Pamatong, who obtained 300 votes in the six-cornered race, went on to file a "very urgent motion" for hearing yesterday (Monday).

According to Macalintal, Pamatong's basis—the separation of Church and state—was not a ground to disqualify the priest.

"Nothing in the Local Government Code of 1991 (Republic Act No. 7160) states that as a ground for disqualification," he said. "It is only a principle, not a ground."

Macalintal said that under RA 7160, someone can be disqualified if he is not a resident of the place when he ran for public office, if he was convicted of a crime of moral turpitude, if he is not a Filipino citizen and if he is not of age.

Digging in on Pamatong, Macalintal said: "He should better go to the (United) States to pursue his case."

ACTRESS Vilma Santos raises her arms in victory after being proclaimed as the new governor of Batangas province by a landslide win over defeated reelectionist Armand Sanchez.
ROGER MARGALLO

Vilma officially new governor of Batangas

BATANGAS CITY—THE COMMISSION on Elections proclaimed Lipa City Mayor Vilma Santos-Recto as Batangas' new governor yesterday at the Sangguniang Panlalawigan hall inside the provincial capitol here.

Lawyer Gloria Petallo, Comelec provincial supervisor, proclaimed Santos at 9:15 a.m. before thousands of supporters and political allies.

Official Comelec results showed that Santos, a Lakas-CMD bet, won in 5,840 precincts with 475,740 votes; followed by reelectionist Gov. Armando Sanchez, 349,969; retired general Nestor Sanares, 34,606, and Marcos Mandanas, 4,797 votes.

Santos won in all but six towns and Tanauan City, in Batangas province.

She also won in the province's four congressional districts with 31 municipalities and three cities.

Santos, an actress turned politician, arrived at the venue at 9:05 a.m. greeted by her political supporters and fans, who occupied the jampacked hall's bleachers.

As in previous occasions, Vilma's proclamation turned into a fans' day for Vilmanians as they took pictures of their idol using cell phone cameras.

Some capitol employees also stood and waited for hours at the session hall lobby just to see their idol.

In her speech after the proclamation, Santos thanked the Batangueños for their support but asked them to cooperate and help her in terms of governance.

"I'm happy because I won, but at the same time, public service is no joke. I'm not promising heaven and earth. Everything would only be effective if there would be teamwork. I need each and every one of you," Santos said, drawing loud cheers and applause from the audience.

Also present in the occasion were Vilma's Lakas party mates, Board Member Chona Dimayuga, elected mayors—namely, Calaca Mayor Sofronio Ona, Malvar Mayor Cristeta Reyes, Rosario Mayor Felipe Marquez—and other political leaders in the province.

Santos finished her speech with her popular tagline, "I will just do my best and God will take care of the rest," which she always used in her campaign in her past nine years as politician.

In an interview with reporters, minutes after her proclamation, Santos reiterated her thanks to the Batangueños for delivering her landslide victory in the polls.

"When you win without problem and you win by a big margin, you should be thankful enough," Santos said, referring to at least 100,000 votes she had over Sanchez.

Asked on her secrets in winning the elections, Santos said she was voted not because of her popularity as an actress but based on her development platforms and her nine-year performance as Lipa mayor.

Upon assuming her office on July 1, Santos said she would consult with her department heads and different sectors of the province to discuss their concerns.

Sanchez, Santos' main rival for the gubernatorial race, however, has not yet conceded defeat.

Marlon Alexander Luistro, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Zero votes prompt call for Iloilo canvass probe

By David Israel Sinay
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—REELECTIONIST Gov. Niel Tupas Sr. and his son, Niel Jr., had zero votes in Sara, Iloilo, prompting poll officials to exclude the municipality's 16 certificates of canvass (COCs) from the provincial canvassing due to "improbable statistics."

In a petition, Eugenio Original, lawyer for the Tupases, said the COCs from Sara were tampered with or falsified. He alleged that fraudulent election returns were canvassed and the certificates contained forged signatures.

Original also wondered how the two got zero votes when they "have duly appointed watchers there."

The governor continued to enjoy a wide margin of votes over his opponent, Roberto Armada. As of 12:32 p.m. on Sunday, Tupas Sr. garnered 338,001 votes against Armada's 170,324.

Armada conceded defeat on Wednesday.

But the younger Tupas, who is running for congressman in the fifth district, trailed his cousin Enrique Suplico Jr.

With four remaining towns—Ajuy, Carles, Barotac Viejo and Sara—to be canvassed, Suplico had a slim lead with 42,661 votes against Tupas' 42,111.

The Comelec was expected to resolve the petition yesterday afternoon.

The COCs in Concepcion and Barotac Viejo were withheld from canvassing following a petition filed by Suplico's lawyer, Ma. Rita Sarabia, who alleged that the returns were manufactured and that members of the board of canvassers in the two towns did not sign the certificates.

On Saturday, the Comelec proclaimed reelectionist Rep. Janet Garin (first district) and Rep. Judy Syjuco (second district).

Garin had 90,764 votes while her opponent, Gerardo Flores, got 44,027. Syjuco led with 60,714 votes over rivals Cecilia Capadosa (38,969) and Diopito Gonzales (1,149).

In the first district, the Comelec proclaimed the winning provincial board members, former Mayor Richard Oscar Garin Jr. of Guimbal town (78,529) and reelectionist Macario Napulan (73,872). In the second district, reelectionist Rodolfo Cabado (51,830) retained his post, together with former Mayor June Mondejar (58,935) of New Lucena town.

CIDG files case vs 2 in slay try on PDI man

CAMP VICENTE LIM, LAGUNA—Exactly a month after the botched killing of Lucena-based INQUIRER correspondent Delfin Mallari Jr., the investigation made headway as the police Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) on Friday filed frustrated murder charges against two men believed to be behind the ambush, an official said Monday.

Senior Supt. Mark Edison Belarma, CIDG-Calabarzon chief, declined to name the two suspects pending the release of warrants for their arrest.

He, however, said the two were both natives of Quezon province.

Reached for his reaction, Mallari said he was elated by the development on the investigation and thanked the CIDG for their prompt response to resolve the case.

He said he had given his full trust to the CIDG in handling the case after the so-called Task Force Mallari created to expedite the investigation failed to come up with any positive development on the foiled murder try.

"As I've said before, I've already forgiven those who did this to me. They are just dispensable pawns of the powers that be. But they have to face whatever sanctions that the state would hand them," Mallari said in a mobile phone conversation.

"I hope the prosecution of the case would lead to the arrest and imprisonment of the mastermind," he added.

Belarma said the case was filed before the provincial prosecutor's office in Lucena City after two eyewitnesses identified the two men as the one who shot Mallari twice and the driver of the motorcycle used in the murder try.

The CIDG investigators, he said, had "very strong evidence" to link the two in the April 19 ambush.

"Our witnesses identified the suspects from several pictures we presented to them. They (the witnesses) recognized the suspect at an instant and without hesitation," Belarma told the INQUIRER.

He said they had located the whereabouts of the suspects.

He said he had also directed CIDG operatives to monitor the movements of the suspects if ever they would go into hiding.

When asked if incumbent Rep. Raffy Nantes would be implicated in the case, he replied: "We still don't know yet. That would be revealed during the formal hearing of the case."

Mallari named Nantes, who was proclaimed as the newly elected governor of Quezon, as the most likely mastermind in the failed attempt on his life.

Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Another Arroyo emerging as party-list House member

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—ANG KASANGGA, the party-list group of Marilou Arroyo, sister of First Gentleman Mike Arroyo and Rep. Ignacio Arroyo Jr. (Neg. Occ., 5th district) won in Negros Occidental over 92 other groups, the Commission on Elections' final results in the province showed yesterday.

If Ang Kasangga wins enough votes nationwide, the First Gentleman's sister will sit as its party-list representative.

In an interview earlier, she said Ang Kasangga, which was organized three and a half years ago, is advocating micro entrepreneurial growth.

Ang Kasangga, that has 45,000 members, hopes to pass laws that will help the poor from falling prey to 5-6 loans, she said.

In the provincial count covering 31 towns and cities of Negros Occidental, Ang Kasangga garnered 25,468 votes, followed by Bayan Muna with 20,554, Buhay - 18,634, A Teacher - 18,342, Anakpawis - 17,955, and Gabriela - 16,702.

In the Bacolod City count Bayan Muna was in first place with 8,103 votes, Gabriela - 7,331, Buhay - 6,102, A Teacher - 4,659 and Partido ng Manggagawa - 6,192.

Representative Arroyo, who won his reelection bid, said his priority in the House of Representatives would be a review of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law (CARL).

"The law expires next year and we want to see a better program put in place to uplift the lives of the people it is supposed to help," he said.

Arroyo said a better system of providing support services to those already given land under CARL should be discussed.

The proclaimed winning board members of the fifth district, Emilio Yulo and Melvin Ibañez, also revealed their priority programs.

Yulo placed emphasis on the improvement of the educational programs in the province while Ibañez, who is a doctor, prioritized health care.

On the other hand, Nehemias de la Cruz and Renato Gustilo, winning provincial board members for the province's first district, also targets education. De la Cruz said he would work for the setting up of vocational schools while Gustilo said he will ask for an increase in scholarship program and maintenance of barangay roads.

Another winning candidate, congressman-elect Julio Ledesma IV (Lakas-CMD) said his highest priority for the first district of Negros Occidental is the completion of the San Carlos City airport that will cost another P250 to P300 million.

Ledesma considered the airport as necessary for the development of the first district as an agro-industrial area and for its eco-tourism thrust.

Also in the pipeline is the setting up of an area for a retirement community and development of Don Salvador Benedicto as the summer capital of Negros Occidental, he added.

In Antique, protests have stalled the proclamation of all but one of the winning candidates.

The board of canvass in that province has so far proclaimed only reelectionist Rep. Exequiel Javier (Lakas-CMD), who won by a margin of nearly 20,000 votes over his closest rival, Robert Delfin (Partido Demokratikong Sosyalista ng Pilipinas).

Former Assemblyman Arturo Pacificador on Friday filed a protest before the Commission on Elections office in Manila to stop the proclamation of reelectionist Gov. Salvacion Zaldivar-Perez. Based on election returns from Antique's 18 municipalities, Perez won with 68,867 votes, while her opponents, Pacificador and Jovito Plameras, got 55,502 and 54,062.

Gil Barcenal, provincial election supervisor, said that under election rules, he could not make a partial proclamation of candidates without permission from the Comelec's main office.

Pacificador asked the suspension of the canvassing of votes for governor and the proclamation of the winning candidate pending the resolution of disqualification cases against Perez and Plameras.

The losing candidates jointly filed the disqualification case against Perez for public spending during the election period, in violation of the Omnibus Election Code, after she handed out checks as financial assistance to barangays in Sibalom on April 10.

Perez, in turn, filed a disqualification case against Plameras for violating Batas Pambansa Blg 52, which forbids retired election officials who had already received retirement benefits to return to the same office. *With a report from Nestor P. Burgos, Inquirer Visayas*

Capiz gives 6-4-2 score to opposition GO team

By Felipe Celino
Inquirer Visayas

ROXAS CITY—THE PROVINCE of Capiz, considered the bailiwick of Sen. Mar Roxas of the Liberal Party, delivered the top slots in the Senate race to the opposition.

Six Genuine Opposition, 4 Team Unity and two independent senatorial candidates made it to the Magic 12 in Capiz, with Joseph Francis Escudero of GO ranking first with 144,643 votes, according to final tabulation of the Commission on Elections here.

Independent Francis Pangilinan ranked second with 143,361 votes, followed by GO's Loren Legarda, who received 142,361 votes.

Except for Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III, a known ally of the LP, Roxas personally endorsed Pangilinan in local radio political ads during the campaign period. Aquino landed fourth with 131,769 votes followed by Senate President Manuel Villar with 111,124 votes.

Sen. Edgardo Angara garnered the highest votes among TU candidates with 104,948, making him No. 6.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson, who was also one of the senatorial candidates supported by the Chinese-Filipino businessmen in Capiz, ranked seventh place with 99,865 votes.

TU candidates Miguel Zubiri (99,659) and Michael Defensor (94,476) occupied the eighth and ninth places. It was followed by two GOs—Aquilino Pimentel (88,018) and Antonio Trillanes (84,443). The last slot was occupied by TU's Ralph Recto with 83,227 votes.

Candidate Prospero Pichay was way below the ranking.

Senator Roxas was here on Saturday to attend the proclamation of his local candidates from the LP-Uswag Capiz who emerged winners by a landslide after getting all the elected key positions against the Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi) local candidates.

In Tagbilaran City, two father and son teams who ran for the mayoral and vice mayoral posts in their towns failed to exert their dominance in local politics.

In both cases, the fathers, who are serving their third and last terms as mayor, tapped their sons to run to take their places while the two fathers decided to slide down as vice mayoral candidates.

In Guindulman town, incumbent Mayor Oriculo Granada ran for vice mayor alongside his son Renanti Granada and both were crushed by their opponents who are also sisters, Ma. Fe Piezas and Marivic Golosino.

Likewise, in the town of Albur, mayoral candidate Ephraim Tungol and his running mate-father, incumbent Mayor Efren Tungol, lost by a wide margin against their opponents—former mayor Jose Ugdoracion and running mate Cirilo Jalad.

While viewed by many as a refusal to give way to other equally qualified aspirants, many "political families" in this island province are practically handing down their elective posts to relatives.

The two father and son tandems might have suffered political upsets in Guindulman and Albur but similar teams in other towns have won.

The mother and son tandem of incumbent Buenavista Mayor Elsa Tirol and vice mayoral aspirant Lowell Tirol came out with convincing victories against their opponents.

The younger Tirol was an eleventh-hour replacement owing to the death of his father (former mayor Leandro Tirol, who was then reelectionist vice mayor) a few weeks into the elections.

This could be an indication of the Tirols' continued dominance in Buenavista despite the passing of their patriarch (Leandro), considered by many as one of the political kingpins of northern Bohol. *With a report from Kit Bagaipo, Inquirer Visayas*

ERIK ARAZAS

NUT SURF
A vendor uses a surf board to sell coconuts to visitors on Boracay Island, bringing his products close to boats carrying divers.

Protests mark poll end in North Luzon areas

By Estanislao Caldez
Inquirer Northern Luzon
and Carmela Reyes
Inquirer Central Luzon

TUGUEGARAO CITY—MORE THAN 500 RESIDENTS here massed up on Wednesday in front of the office of the Archdiocese of Tuguegarao to contest reelectionist Cagayan Rep. Manuel Mamba's reported lead in the third district congressional race.

The residents said Mamba, who was running against Tuguegarao Mayor Randolph Ting, benefited from alleged vote-padding in Tuao, Mamba's hometown.

They were further agitated when Intoy Meman, Mamba's chief of staff, started going around the city offering the lawmaker's gratitude to residents through a public address system mounted over a vehicle.

Meman had to turn back when he saw the crowd gathering outside the archdiocese's office.

Ting, who was leading over Mamba in earlier tallies, said they were prepared for a protest rally.

Discrepancy

Fr. Gerry Perez, Tuao parish priest and chief of the town's National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel), discovered the 3,000 vote discrepancy credited to Mamba when he compared the Tuao certificate of canvass and the document released to the Namfrel.

But the archdiocese said it would stand by the latest Namfrel count.

In a statement it released to the INQUIRER, the archdiocese pointed out that "no matter what the discrepancy there might be between our count and the count of others—official or not—we stand by our count, and in so doing congratulate and commend our volunteers for a job splendidly, if not heroically, done."

"While Namfrel's quick count results are unofficial… discrepancies may evidence irregularities, whether intended or not, whether constituting election violations or not," it said.

Priest's support

The statement was signed by Fr. Manny Catral, Fr. Gary Agcaoili, Msgr. Gerry Perez, Fr. Andy Gumangan, Fr. Ranhilio Aquino and Fr. Bernie Corpus.

The statement urged protesters "to observe the procedures for protests and contests provided for by law."

A Tuao policeman said a Comelec official allowed late voters to proceed and cast their ballots inside a vehicle on Wednesday, two days after the elections.

The sources claimed these late voters account for the 3,000 votes favoring Mamba.

Bulacan tension

In Bulacan, policemen were sent to the Hiyas Convention Center in Malolos City on Wednesday morning to secure the provincial canvassing center following reports that supporters of rival politicians would disrupt the proceedings.

Early Wednesday, a fire broke out at an office at the provincial capitol here. The capitol is about 300 meters from the convention center.

SFO2 Manuel Lopez of the Malolos fire station said no one was hurt in the fire but documents, files and computers at the capitol's accounting office were destroyed after the fire started at 4:30 a.m. The office was located at the second floor of the capitol.

Lopez said firemen put out the fire at 4:45 a.m., preventing it from spreading to the other offices.

No losers

The leading gubernatorial candidates, former Gov. Roberto Pagdanganan and Board Member Joselito Mendoza, brother of outgoing Gov. Josefina de la Cruz, were both claiming victory amid the slow canvassing of votes in the province.

Both camps have traded accusations of engaging in fraud.

Pagdanganan claimed the fire was started by his rivals to destroy documents and files that may point to irregularities in the provincial government.

But Gov. De la Cruz said she and her brother were not behind the fire, noting that they would not gain anything from destroying documents and files in the accounting office at the capitol.

"We do not have any motive to destroy the files. Anyway, each computer file [had] back up kept inside a safety vault," De la Cruz said.

She said they do not have any reason to cheat as her brother was winning against Pagdanganan.

"They are having a hard time to accept that my brother, who is a village chair, can defeat [Pagdanganan]," she said.

10,000 lead

She said her brother posted a 10,000 vote lead over Pagdanganan in the count of the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting and Namfrel on Wednesday.

She said they were worried about the delay in the submission of election returns from various cities and towns in Bulacan. *With a report from Frank Cimatu, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

Mayor says SC decision paved way for new term

MABALACAT, PAMPANGA—MAYOR Marino Morales said the Supreme Court's May 9 decision that unseated him for having served a fourth term appeared to have worked in his favor.

"In saying that I cannot be considered a candidate in the May 2004 elections and that my votes [in that election] could not be counted because I had served three terms before that, I had in effect an interruption in public office. That makes me a qualified candidate this May 2007," Morales told reporters on Friday.

The court said Morales had completed three consecutive terms, which includes the 1998-2001 term. Morales, according to the decision penned by Associate Justice Angelina Sandoval-Gutierrez, served as mayor during that term even as a regional trial court ruled that his rival, Anthony Dee, was the winner in the 1998 election.

It was Dee who sought the disqualification of Morales in the 2004 elections. That case, however, led to the May 9 SC decision that gave Morales the basis to call his 2007 candidacy as a "fresh start."

Like in past three elections, Dee ran for mayor against Morales.

"It seemed to have backfired on him," Morales told the INQUIRER.

But Dee assailed Morales for insisting that he is still qualified to run.

"That's how cheaters and shameless people are. The Supreme Court has ruled that he has been disqualified," Dee said.

In a dissenting opinion, Associate Justice Presbitero Velasco Jr. said the "obvious outcome, however, from the interregnum of 2004-2007 is that [Morales] is qualified to run for a fresh three terms (2007-2010, 2010-2013 and 2013-2016)."

Velasco said if the ruling on the case of former Mayor Romeo Lonzanida of San Antonio, Zambales, was applied, "Morales would only be qualified to run for the last time for the term 2007-2010 under the three-term quota since there would be a gap in his service during the 1998-2001 term due to a void proclamation."

Romulo Macalintal, Morales' lawyer, said the SC, in the Lonzanida case, ruled that a local executive should serve continuous, uninterrupted three terms.

Velasco also said the Borja doctrine on the prescribed valid election and full service of term should be reviewed.

Macalintal said the SC ruled that Pateros Vice Mayor Cesar Borja merely succeeded the mayor who died (he did not get the position through an election victory) so the term he had served by succession was not considered.

Morales said he asked his campaign staff to focus on an information drive telling Mabalacat voters that he still was a qualified candidate in the May 14 elections and that the court decided only on the 2004 disqualification case. *Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon*

Overprice fears hound P1.2-B Bicol fund

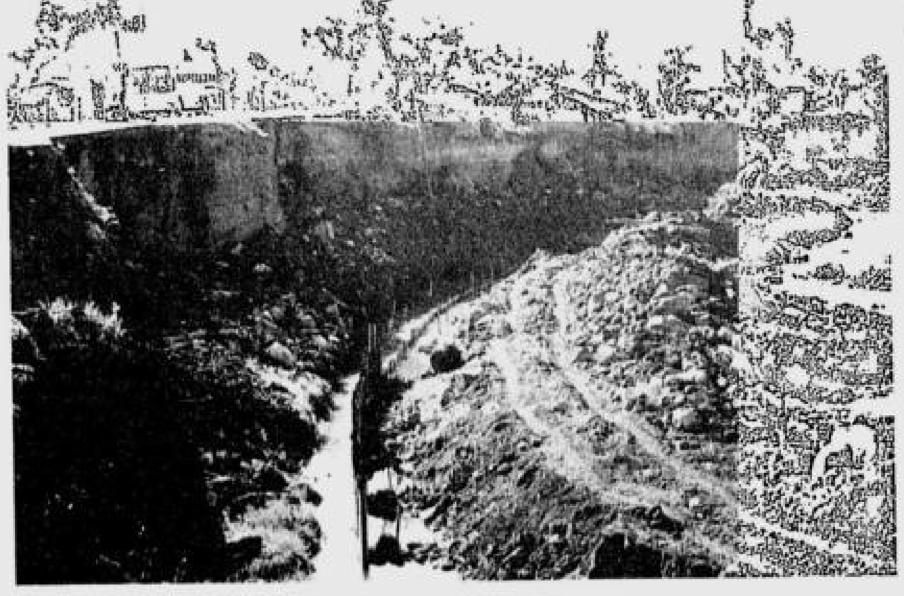
LEGAZPI CITY—FEARS OF OVERPRICE are hovering over the release by the Department of Public Works and Highways of P1.28 billion in funds to its 13 district engineering offices in Bicol.

The funds were meant for the repair or construction of new flood control structures, roads, bridges, government buildings and other infrastructure damaged or destroyed by Supertyphoons "Milenyo," "Reming" and "Seniang."

This early, residents of villages along the Polangui-Nasisi Road, in the third district of Albay, are questioning the P28.9-million cost of the repair and restoration of the damaged pavement of the road.

They claimed that the concrete road was still intact and its pavement was just covered with sand and the cost could not have gone up to P28.9 million.

Orlando C. Roces, DPWH regional director, announced the release of the funds after Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya Jr. also announced the availability of the infrastructure funds for typhoon victims.



THE REPAIR **of this embankment in Travesia in Guinobatan, Albay has a cost of P48.2 million.**

NIÑO JESUS ORBETA/INQUIRER SOUTHERN LUZON

Poll funds

Fears were raised the funds would be diverted to election purposes, as have funds intended for various government projects in the 2004 elections.

The P1.28 billion rehabilitation fund for public works was part of the P10-billion fund included in the General Appropriations Act of 2007 or Republic Act No. 9401 under the Calamity Assistance and Rehabilitation Effort (Care) for typhoon victims.

Senators from the Bicol region were credited with making the funds' release possible.

Roces immediately ordered the bidding out of several flood control, bridge and road rehabilitation projects.

Up for bidding are the restoration of the boulder dike with concrete facing of the Yawa River portion near the La Playa Village and Aquinas University (Legazpi City), P40.5 million; rehabilitation of the boulder dike with concrete facing of the Yawa River portion in Tagas, Daraga, Albay, P43.9 million; restoration and rehabilitation of a dike along the Yawa River at the Culiat, Daraga Section, P48.2 million; restoration and rehabilitation of a boulder dike with concrete facing and spillway at the Yawa River in the Malabog-Busay section leading to the Cagsawa National Park, P48.4 million; and the restoration and rehabilitation of dike along the Binitayan-Maninila portion of the Yawa River, P48.2 million.

Typhoon victims

Also scheduled for bidding are the repair and improvement of the damaged bridge approach in Ligao City, P24.1 million; repair and rehabilitation of the bank revetment in Travesia, Guinobatan, Albay, P48.2 million; and repair and restoration of the damaged road pavement of Polangui-Nasisi Road, P28.9 million.

In announcing the release of the rehabilitation fund to DPWH earlier, Andaya asked the Bicolanos to closely monitor the implementation of the rehabilitation projects to ensure that the government funds would not go to waste.

Rainy days back

This, after some residents displaced by lahar flows during Supertyphoon Reming expressed fear that they would suffer the same fate if the rehabilitation projects, especially flood control ones, were not properly implemented.

They asked concerned government agencies not to allow themselves to be influenced by politicians on the use of the rehabilitation fund.

"Thousands of lives are at stake here if the fund will not be properly handled," they added, saying that the projects were crucial because the rainy days are coming soon. *Ephraim Aguilar, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

LET US MOVE FORWARD

With the voting over, it is now time to move forward.

With the economy on track and the market reacting positively to the elections, we must not lose the opportunity to consolidate our gains and translate these to economic benefits that will address poverty and improve the lives of our fellow Filipinos.

We are one in calling for the speedy and transparent conclusion of the canvassing of votes to finally determine our duly elected set of national and local leaders. Towards this end, we must continuously work to implement reforms in our electoral process.

Now is the best time to work for a stronger public-private partnership to ensure our track to progress and economic development.

This much we owe our people.

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PHILIPPINE FOOD EXPORTERS ASSOCIATION (PHILFOODEX)

RP-PROC BUSINESS COUNCIL

SC justice-nominee Ong gives proof he's Filipino

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE JUDICIAL AND BAR Council yesterday deferred its decision on whether Sandiganbayan Justice Gregory Ong is qualified to sit in the Supreme Court.

Ong's appointment to the Supreme Court last week was recalled because of a controversy over whether he was a natural-born Filipino.

The JBC has not decided on Ong's citizenship status because it was still waiting for Malacañang's endorsement of Ong's documents to the council, according to Supreme Court spokesperson Jose Midas Marquez. The JBC will meet again on June 1.

The 54-year-old Ong, for his part, defended himself and yesterday submitted a memorandum to the JBC presenting arguments to support his being a natural-born Filipino.

Ong said in his memorandum that since he was born of a Chinese father and a Filipino mother, he qualified under the Constitution as a natural-born citizen of the Philippines.

He cited Article IV, Section 2, of the Constitution which states that those who elect Philippine citizenship upon reaching the age of majority, if they were born before Jan. 17, 1973, of Filipino mothers, are deemed natural-born.

He said the 1991 Supreme Court ruling also applied to those born of Filipino mothers who elected citizenship before Feb. 2, 1987.

Ong said his act of voting in Philippine elections, his becoming a public prosecutor and a member of the judiciary, which are professions open only to Filipinos, constitute a positive act of election of Philippine citizenship.

He said that since his father, Eugenio, was naturalized as a Filipino when Ong was 11 years old, he became a Filipino then. And since his mother, Dy Guiok Santos, was a natural-born Filipino, there was no need for him to formally elect Philippine citizenship.

"Thus... the undersigned could not have been expected to elect citizenship through a formal and sworn statement since he had been a citizen since he was 11.

Ong quoted a Supreme Court ruling saying that for a Filipino to elect Philippine citizenship was superfluous and could lead to absurdity.

Ong also cited a May 22, 1997, DOJ opinion recognizing him as a natural-born citizen.

In that opinion, it was confirmed that his mother was a natural-born Filipino since she was the legitimate daughter of Juan Santos, who in turn derived his Filipino citizenship from his mother, Maria Santos.

When asked who raised the issue of Ong's citizenship before the Supreme Court, Marquez said the issue came up when the Supreme Court justices were presented with a copy of Ong's birth certificate by a representative from the Office of the Bar Confidant.

PHILIPPINES

ONE LOVELY SEÑORITA
Miss Philippines Anna Theresa Licaros parades in native dress in a fashion show in Mexico City on Sunday ahead of the Miss Universe 2007 pageant which will be held on May 28. AP

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Raps part of conspiracy–MJ

By Julie M. Aurelio and DJ Yap

FORMER MANILA REP. MARK Jimenez yesterday said the charges of abuse lodged against him by his wife Caroline were the product of a vast conspiracy.

He accused his wife's lawyers of using Caroline as a pawn in an attempt to discredit him upon the prompting, allegedly, of a lawyer identified with Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco.

"This is a conspiracy. Carol is not the real issue here," he said in an interview at his Essensa residence in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.

He said the efforts to malign him were allegedly masterminded by Cojuangco's lawyer, Gabriel Villareal, in retaliation for his position that the coco levy funds should be directly distributed to the farmers.

In his petition to have Caroline committed to a drug treatment facility filed at a Taguig City court, Jimenez alleged that his wife's lawyer, Lorna Kapunan, was paid P500,000 by Villareal.

"...And as Villareal is the lawyer of San Miguel Corp. and Cojuangco, such support would not be given if Villareal, Cojuangco and Ramon Ang were not part of a conspiracy to destroy Mark Jimenez and Hulog ng Langit," he said, referring to his group.

He said such a conspiracy was undertaken because he had pointed out to a "high government official" the following:

RAPS/A18

MARK Jimenez

INQUIRER PHOTOS

CAROLINE Castañeda Jimenez

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Pasay, Parañaque winners proclaimed; Munti gets new BOC

By Julie M. Aurelio

THE HEATED POLITICAL ATMOSphere in the cities of Pasay and Parañaque is expected to cool down with the proclamation of the winning candidates in the May 14 elections.

It was sweet vindication for former Pasay Mayor Wenceslao "Peewee" Trinidad and his running mate, ex-Vice Mayor Antonino Calixto, when the local Commission on Elections declared them the winners in the race for the city's two top posts.

Trinidad won the mayoral race after garnering 72,446 votes over his closest rival, Rep. Consuelo Dy who received 66,444 votes. Calixto, on the other hand, got 77,280 votes compared to his closest contender, Arvin "Bong" Tolentino who garnered 35,450 votes.

In the race for Pasay's lone congressional seat, Jose Antonio "Lito" Roxas won over incumbent Pasay Mayor Allan Panaligan. Roxas won by only 1,768 votes, receiving 49,902 votes against Panaligan's 48,134 votes. "The people of Pasay have spoken: Not Guilty!" Calixto said, adding, "The people voted with their conscience."

It was a triumphant comeback for the pair after they were suspended last year for six months by the Ombudsman over an allegedly anomalous garbage contract.

Earlier this year, the Ombudsman ordered their dismissal from government service over the same case. Both dismissal orders are still on appeal. In Parañaque, incumbent Mayor Florencio "Jun" Bernabe Jr. was proclaimed the city's mayor-elect on Sunday night.

He beat his rival for the post, former Mayor Pablo Olivares by garnering 100,178 votes against Olivares' 57,897 votes.

But Bernabe's running mate, actor and TV host Anjo Yllana, lost to Gustavio Tambunting of the United Opposition.

Tambunting had 87,246 votes in the final tally compared to Yllana's 67,986 votes.

The city's incumbent congressmen, Representatives Eduardo Zialcita of the first district and Roilo Golez of the second district, both won in their reelection bids.

Zialcita was proclaimed the winner after he received 47,428 votes. His closest rival for the post, Walfrido Ferrer, only had 14,070 votes. Golez, on the other hand, garnered 48,310 votes.

Resumption

Meanwhile, the canvassing of election returns in Muntinlupa City is expected to resume today following a two-day suspension after two of the three members of the Board of Canvassers fell ill.

Yesterday, the Comelec appointed a new BOC who will continue the proceedings. Michael Dioneda, acting Comelec National Capital Region director, appointed Lope Gay Jr. as BOC chair, Ramon Rosello as vice chair and Ma. Anne Gonzales as the BOC secretary.

The appointment came after BOC chair Ma. Lourdes Ugalino and Fe Faz, a BOC member, were hospitalized over the weekend after they complained of feeling unwell.

Their illness forced the suspension of the canvassing of votes.

The snail-like pace of canvassing in Muntinlupa City has irked the camps of Rep. Ruffy Biazon, who is running for reelection, and his top contender for the post, TV personality Ricardo "Dong" Puno.

Pointing out that both camps have more to lose from the halted proceedings, Puno's legal counsel, Millicent Desiderio, bewailed the delays, which she blamed on the former BOC members.

"We just want them to start moving already," Desiderio told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

Earlier, Puno's lawyers asked the Comelec to replace the BOC on the grounds that its members were incompetent. They also filed a motion asking the poll body to hasten the pace of the canvassing in the city.

Biazon, for his part, said it was unfair for Puno's team to accuse the BOC of slowing down the proceedings.

"It was their questioning that slowed down the proceedings. They are pressuring the BOC and now the members have been affected by the pressure," he added.

As of the last canvassing, Biazon was leading with 31,107 votes against Puno's 30,337 votes. *With Hershey D. Homol*

ELEKSYON 2007

Partial Comelec and Namfrel counts compiled by Metro Staff*
as of May 21, Monday

NCR

CALOOCAN CITY	
Congressman (1st district)	
ECHIVERRI, Ricojudge Javier (Lakas)	19565
FUENTECILLA, Jose (KBL)	39
GARRA, Leo (Katipunan ng Bagong Caloocan)	1429
GUNDAYAO, Virgilio (Kapatiran Party/Ind)	123
MALAPITAN, Oscar (NP/UNO)	37788
PLA, Nadine Marie Inez (Liping Kalookan)	2094
Congressman (2nd district)	
APAR, Virgilio (KBL)	42
BAGUS, Tolentino (Lakas)	9250
CAJAYON, Maria Mitzi (LP)	14413
DIVINA, Nilo (Kampi)	11872
ERIÇE, Edgar (LP)	12231
MUÑOZ, Albert (Ind)	5413
Mayor	
ASISTIO, Luis (NPC)	47068
ASISTIO, Macario (Liping Kalookan)	2897
ECHIVERRI, Enrico (Lakas)	54022
MALONZO, Reynaldo (Kabaca)	15074
UDHAY, Danilo (Ind)	299
Vice -Mayor	
CAMAYO, Henry (Camayo)	33398
VALERA, Luis Tito (Kampi)	68699
VALLEGA	9554
MUNTINLUPA CITY	
CANVASSING SUSPENDED	

Inquirer Metro Reporters and Staff: Margaux Ortiz with Inquirer Election 2007 volunteers Pam Casin and Frances Mangosing.

Ducat seeks extension of hospital stay

By Allison W. Lopez

AFTER UNDERGOING HIS SECOND ANGIOplasty in three months, hostage-taker Armando "Jun" Ducat yesterday said he would ask the court to let him stay at the Ospital ng Maynila while he is recovering from the procedure.

Ducat, who is facing charges of serious illegal detention for holding 26 children hostage inside a bus in Manila last March, is scheduled to be released today from the Cardinal Santos Hospital in San Juan after 11 days of confinement for an operation that he described as "successful."

"One of the arteries in my heart was blocked so an operation was needed," the 56-year-old engineer told the INQUIRER.

Ducat said he would file a motion for transfer to the Ospital ng Maynila because his doctors had advised him to stay in a hospital during his recuperation. "It's also cheaper there," he added.

Ducat racked up a bill amounting to P318,000 at the Cardinal Santos Hospital, excluding doctors' fees. His March 6 operation cost him P500,000.

Raps part of conspiracy . . .

From page A17

- the role of Cojuangco in the P3 billion borrowed from the United Coconut Planters Bank by Ang through three dummy companies in 1999 to pay for the money received as downpayment from the aborted buyout of SMC through the Lucio Tan Group of Companies, where Tan was the victim of a scam engineered by Ang and Cojuangco;
- why the coco levy fund has not been returned to coconut farmers; and
- the activities of Cojuangco and Ang in the buying and selling of companies which was detrimental to the shareholders of SMC, which includes the Republic of the Philippines.

Jimenez also produced documents that he claimed supported his contention that his wife is legally insane, and should be committed in a drug rehabilitation center.

He attached a certification from Dangerous Drugs Board-accredited physician Ronnie del Mundo, who certified that he saw and examined the 46-year-old Caroline on May 16.

At yesterday's hearing for the petition for writ of habeas corpus filed by Caroline's half-sister, Rose Flaminiano, Del Mundo confirmed that he saw Jimenez's wife at Silvercrest Foundation, a rehabilitation center.

The doctor, however, told the court that he did not administer a drug test or physical examination and only conducted an interview to determine if Caroline should be admitted to the facility.

According to Del Mundo, Jimenez's wife is confined in Room 346 of Silvercrest.

Flaminiano filed the petition last week at Branch 202 of the Las Piñas City Regional Trial Court after her sister was allegedly kidnapped on May 16.

According to Flaminiano, Caroline was taken from the Makati Tuscany Condominium by eight men who forced her into an Isuzu Crosswind.

The sisters were scheduled to meet Kapunan to attend a hearing set on that day regarding Caroline's petition for a permanent protection order against Jimenez.

Caroline had earlier accused her estranged husband of subjecting her to physical and mental abuse since the 70s. A court later granted her a temporary restraining order against her husband. Flaminiano said her sister was being held against her will inside the rehabilitation center owned by Jimenez's niece, Diane Crespo.

She added that her sister is not a drug addict although she takes prescription drugs because she is epileptic.

Kapunan, meanwhile, said Jimenez should have first secured a court order before he took Caroline.

The petition for writ of habeas corpus has yet to be resolved by Judge Elizabeth Yu-Guray, who adjourned the proceedings late yesterday.

DID YOU KNOW

THE FIRST operation performed on Siamese twins in the Philippines was performed at the Makati Medical Center on May 21-22, 1995. A team of 78 doctors and nurses successfully separated 2-year-old twins Peter and Paul Clemena who were joined at the pelvic bone and shared an intestine. The cost of the operation and subsequent treatment, estimated at P4 million, was shouldered by the hospital.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research

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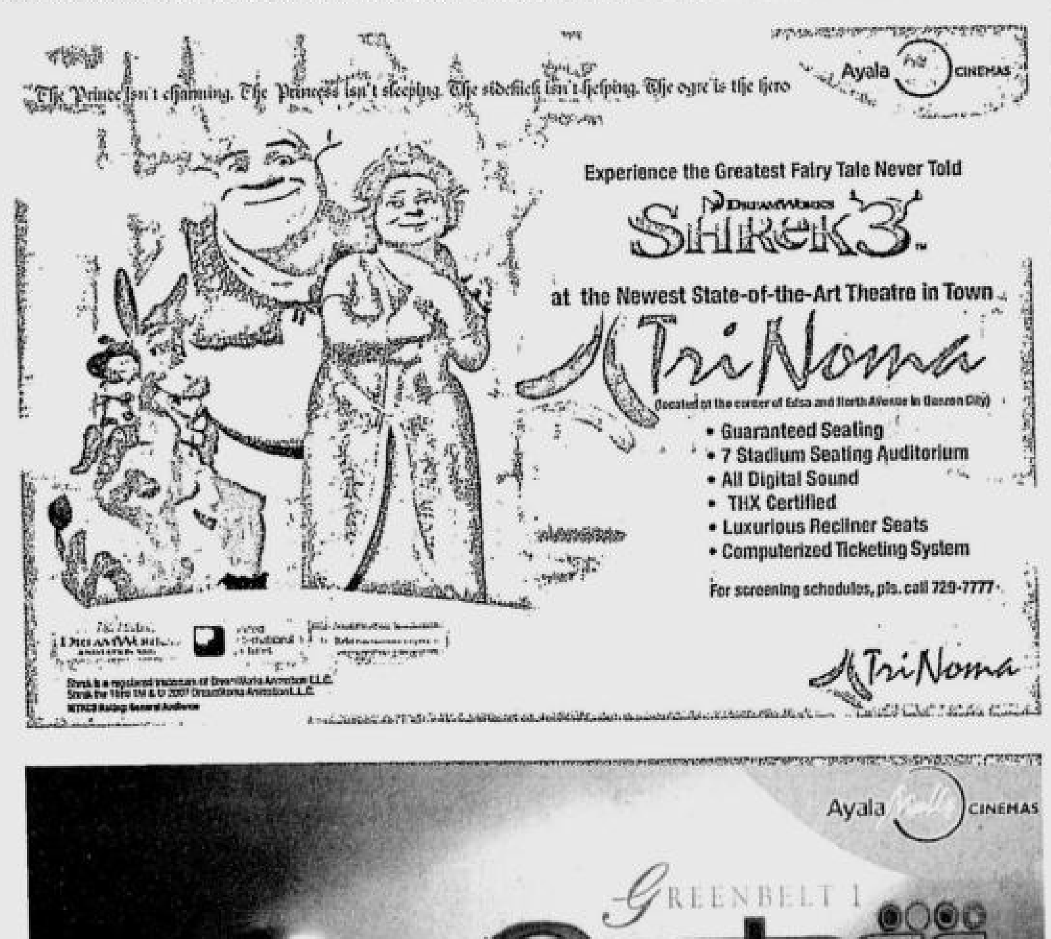
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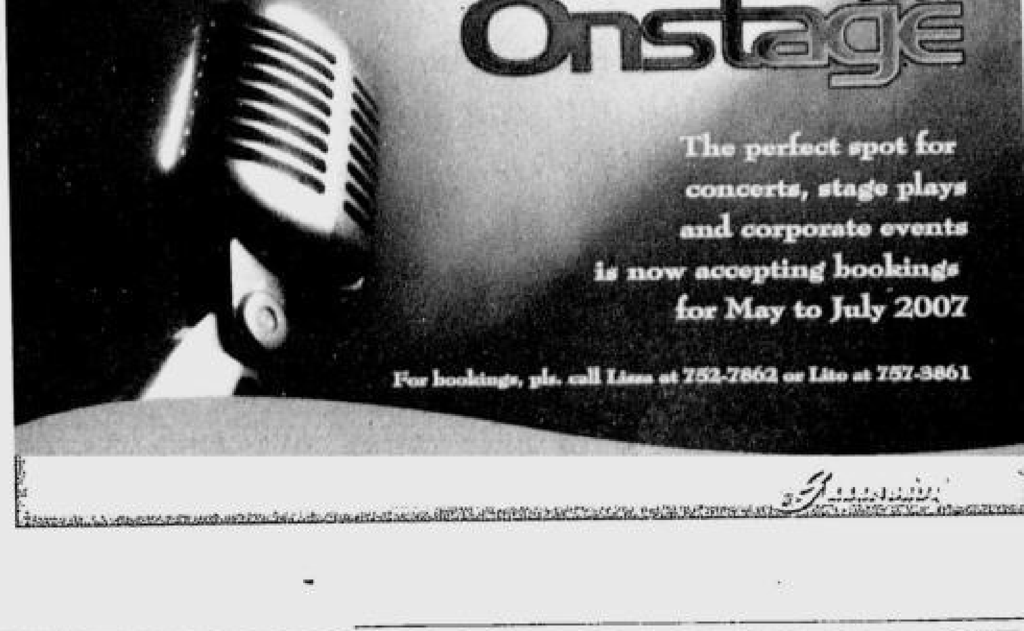
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Taking too long on paralytic case

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

SO, IT'S NOT THE FAULT AFTER ALL of the Court of Appeals that the appealed conviction of Ronald "Jeff" Quesada, a complete paralytic has not been acted on until now.

The Office of the Solicitor General, which defends cases against government institutions in the appellate court and the Supreme Court, has been asking for an extension to file its brief.

The solicitor general should consider Quesada as a special case.

Quesada is probably the only complete paralytic in the world convicted of rape.

He is serving a life term at the National Penitentiary.

Quesada is a quadriplegic, meaning he can't move both his hands and feet, and is confined to a wheelchair.

His meals are spoon fed to him.

He has to be carried to the toilet by two or more persons.

Bulacan Judge Andres Soriano is being investigated by the Supreme Court on his decision convicting Quesada of rape.

Quesada's case is an example that magistrates in this country are not always judicious in their decisions.

* * *

My past columns about corrupt judges south of the Pasig River alluded to, among others, Makati Judge Evelyn Arcaya-Chua who was suspended by the Supreme Court recently.

Chief Justice Reynato Puno ordered Chua's suspension for alleged irregularities in the issuance of temporary restraining orders and permanent protection orders.

In one of my columns, I wrote bout a woman judge who allegedly demanded bribe money from a male Filipino overseas contract worker to rule in his favor on a domestic case with his life.

When the OFW said he didn't have money, the judge allegedly said she didn't believe him since he was working abroad and earning dollars.

* * *

At the time I wrote last Friday that candidate Lilia "Baby" Pineda was winning in the Pampanga gubernatorial contest over Fr. Eddie Panlilio, that was the trend.

The trend changed later that day, and I was red in the face the following day when reports said the priest had won.

It was a very close and unprecedented contest.

What I wanted to point out was that both sides fought a fair fight.

Pineda, contrary to allegations from Panlilio's camp, had no power to engage in massive cheating since she was not the incumbent.

* * *

I'm surprised over reports that Pineda is now contesting the results of the balloting since she told me Saturday that she lost a good fight.

Panlilio's victory validates the truism once again that the middle class and the intellectuals lead and win revolutions and the poorer class follows.

The priest's victory was a revolt of the middle class and the intellectuals in the province.

Besides, Pineda and Lapid cancelled each other out with their public statements that if the Pampanga voters didn't like any of them, they should vote for Panlilio instead.

Court grants bail to Leviste

By DJ Yap
and Leila B. Salaverria

FORMER BATANGAS GOV. JOSE Antonio Leviste, who stands accused of killing his longtime aide, Rafael de las Alas, will be getting out of jail soon after a Makati court granted him bail yesterday.

Judge Elmo Alameda of Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 150 allowed Leviste to post a P300,000 bail for his provisional liberty after finding that the prosecution failed to prove strong evidence of guilt.

Court staff employees said Leviste's lawyers posted the cash bond yesterday afternoon, but they were not able to get a release order as Alameda had already left the office.

Leviste, who has been detained at the Makati City Jail, is expected to be released today once his bail is approved, a member of Alameda's staff said. He maintains that he shot his aide to defend himself.

The court said the prosecution, led by Senior State Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco failed to present sufficient evidence that De las Alas' killing was attended with treachery, premeditation and cruelty. "Not a single eyewitness was presented to testify on the methods adopted by the assailant or the actual number of assailants who participated in the killing of De las Alas or how the attack commenced," the court said.

"Mere inferences or presumptions, no matter how logical and probable they might be" would not be enough to offset the absence of eyewitnesses," it added.

Manuel Singson, Leviste's lawyer, said he was not surprised by the ruling, since the prosecution's case was "full of speculations and conjectures."

Velasco said he would appeal the court's decision. "I respect the integrity of the judge," he said, adding that he was still studying the court's ruling.

Velasco also maintained that there was sufficient evidence to back up the murder charge against Leviste. He said cruelty was evident from the gunshot wounds on the body of De las Alas who was shot on the face, head and nape.

METROBRIEFS

Low-cost houses for poor

MANDALUYONG Mayor Neptali Gonzales yesterday awarded low cost rent-to-own housing units to 57 families in the city as part of his administration's housing program for poor families and informal settlers. Costing about P9 million, the Abella Housing project would benefit poor families living in Barangay Mabini. Each housing unit is made of concrete and measures about 22-sq m. Lee Chan, city public information officer, said the housing units are very basic. Beneficiaries have to pay P300 a month for their first year which is intended for the land, Chan said. After a year, they would pay the city P2,000 a month for 25 years.

Kristine L. Alave with Joseph John Raymundo

'Arugain' project launching

Civitan International will launch its I care "Arugain" project today, May 22, at the Quezon City Circle Development Park and Barangay Doña Imelda on Araneta Avenue, Quezon City. Arugain stands for Anak na Responsible sa Ulirang Gabay ng Ama at Ina (Responsible Children through the Proper Guidance of the Father and Mother)." The two Arugain centers will be the training, research and service centers for the implementation of the Portage program in partnership with the Cooperative Education Service Agency Wisconsin, USA and in cooperation with the Departments of Education, Health and Social Welfare and Development and local government units.

US employers unhappy with immigration bill

WASHINGTON—EMPLOYERS, who helped shape a major immigration bill over the last three months, said on Sunday that they were unhappy with the result because it would not cure the severe labor shortages they foresee in the coming decade.

In addition, employers expressed alarm as they learned that the Senate bill would require them to check a government database to verify that all current and former employees—aliens and citizens alike—are eligible to work in the United States.

The Senate begins debating the bill on Monday. Supporters, including the White House, had hoped that senators would finish work on it this week, before the Memorial Day recess.

But leading members of Congress said Sunday that the bill would take more time and could face significant hurdles.

The Senate Republican leader, Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, said that the immigration bill "can't possibly be completed before Memorial Day." On the ABC News program "This Week," McConnell said the Senate would need at least two weeks to digest and amend the bill, which he described as "a big, complicated piece of legislation."

At the same time, the House speaker, Nancy Pelosi, expressed concern about a central element of the bill, under which the government would establish a point system to evaluate would-be immigrants, giving more weight to job skills and education and less to family ties.

"I have serious objection to the point system that is in the bill now, but perhaps that can be improved," said Pelosi, D-Calif., asserted that this part of the bill, ardently sought by the White House and Republican senators, could undermine "family unification principles which have been fundamental to American immigration."

In the last few years, employers have become a potent force in the debate on immigration, pleading with Congress to authorize more visas for workers in both high-skill and low-skill categories.

Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., a co-author of the bill, said the point system was devised so America "can compete for the best minds that exist in the world."

Robert P. Hoffman, a vice president of Oracle, the business software company, endorsed that goal, but said the bill would not achieve it.

"A merit-based system for allocating green cards may sound good for business," said Hoffman, who is co-chairman of Compete America, a coalition of high-tech companies. "But after reviewing the proposal, we have concluded that it is the wrong approach and will not solve the talent crisis facing many U.S. businesses. In fact, in some ways, it could leave American employers in a worse position."

Business executives said they were in a better position than the government to decide what talents were needed. *New York Times*

A WOMAN admires busts of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) "heroes" at a memorial site in Hong Kong Park. AFP

SARS inflicted severe damage to Hong Kong

HONG KONG—IT WAS A TIME of fear and suspicion, when bars and restaurants emptied and people shunned contact on the streets. In the decade since its return to China, nothing quite shook Hong Kong like the SARS crisis.

Now, at Hong Kong's monument to the seven health workers who died battling to contain the highly infectious respiratory disease, the smiles on the brass figurines hide the terror of a city that was nearly brought to its knees.

Known as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), it sneaked up without warning early in 2003.

Although it killed a relatively small number of people—299 died in Hong Kong during the four-month outbreak out of a population of some seven million—the fear it engendered inflicted huge psychological and economic damage.

It also remains a genuine concern as bird flu strikes other parts of Asia, threatening an even deadlier epidemic.

"SARS was the first infectious disease to cause global alarm," said Malik Peiris, professor of microbiology at the University of Hong Kong, and leader of a team that discovered the source of the disease and was eventually able to halt it.

"As such it was a pointer to what is likely to happen, but in much greater proportion, should there be a bird flu pandemic," Peiris said.

SARS remains the nadir of Hong Kong's post-colonial history, an event that swept away the last vestige of optimism after the June 30, 1997 reunification with China.

As the virus began picking off victims, confidence evaporated.

A World Health Organization travel notice kept tourists and investors away, bringing the local airline industry—already handicapped by the Sept. 11 attacks—close to collapse.

Streets were deserted as people shunned social contact. Surgical face masks became the norm, giving the sea of humanity on the subways and buses an eerily blank appearance.

"I'd just come back to Hong Kong from a few years overseas and the city I returned to was so different," said Neil Dickens, a British executive at a printing company, who has lived on and off here for the past 12 years.

"The bars were quiet—if they were still open: a lot went under due to SARS— nd the level of buzz was just nil," said the 39-year old.

"It had an air of abandon as if tumbleweed would drift across the street at any minute." Taxi driver Leung Wai-man recalled the fear. *AFP*

Roadside blast kills 6 US soldiers in Iraq

BAGHDAD—SIX US SOLDIERS and an interpreter were killed by a roadside bomb in western Baghdad on Saturday, the US military said as a search for three abducted soldiers entered its second week on Sunday.

The soldiers and their interpreter had been uncovering caches of weapons, including grenades and small arms, as well as bomb-making equipment in the capital over the past week.

"Finding these weapons caches helps reduce the threat of insurgent attacks and continues to aid in providing a more secure and safe living environment for the Iraqi people," the military said in a statement.

More than 3,400 US soldiers have been killed since the US-led invasion to topple Saddam Hussein in 2003.

At least 70 US troops have died so far this month as the US military pours thousands of extra troops into the capital as part of a security crackdown seen as a last-ditch attempt to stop Iraq sliding into all-out sectarian civil war.

Fifteen soldiers have been killed in the past three days.

Thousands of US troops are searching for three soldiers missing since an ambush south of Baghdad on May 12. Four US soldiers and an Iraqi interpreter were killed in the attack.

An al-Qaida-linked group has claimed it has the soldiers.

Gen. David Petraeus, the commander of US forces in Iraq, says he believes at least two of the soldiers are still alive.

The soldiers were abducted in a Sunni Arab insurgency stronghold known as the "triangle of death," where al-Qaida also abducted two US soldiers last June. Their badly mutilated bodies were found days later after a similarly huge search.

Military spokesman Maj. Gen. William Caldwell told CNN that US forces had on Friday killed the mastermind behind an audacious assault on a government compound in the holy Shi'ite city of Kerbala in January.

Insurgents posing as Americans had entered the compound, killed a US soldier and drove off with four others whom they later shot and killed.

The security crackdown began in mid-February as part of a plan to buy time for the government of Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki to meet a series of political benchmarks aimed at promoting national reconciliation. *Reuters*

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PNOC-ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Energy Complex, Merritt Road
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City 1634
Tel No 893-1320, Local 5285

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND BID

The PNOC-Energy Development Corporation is inviting all interested suppliers to apply and submit sealed bids for the supply and delivery of the following:

Item Description	*APPROVED BUDGET*
One Unit Portable Thermal Scanner Under UM 705116	*PHP 2,200,000.00*
Various Sizes of Carbon Steel Pipes Under FGJ 60938	*PHP 3,865,000.00*

Eligibility forms and bidding documents shall be available for issuance at the above address c/o Roderick R. Cabantog starting May 22, 2007, from 9:30 a.m to 3:30 p.m. and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of PHP 1,500.00 per document.

For purposes of clarifying certain matters, a pre-bidding conference shall be held on May 30, 2007, 2:00 p.m at the above address.

Applications for eligibility and sealed bids shall be submitted to and registered with the PNOC-EDC Supply, Property and Materials Management Division, at the above address and thereafter dropped in the padlocked bid box thereat not later than 2:00 p.m. (Supply Management Department Office Wall Clock time) on June 13, 2007. Public opening of bids shall follow immediately thereafter. Late bids shall not be accepted.

Prospective bidders shall signify conformance to the bidding terms and conditions, as required, and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. Source of funding is from Internal Cash Generation of PNOC-EDC. All bids should be within the Approved Budget for the Contract in order to qualify.

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation reserves the right to annul the bidding process, to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality in the bids received and to accept such bid which is most advantageous to PNOC-EDC without thereby incurring liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the ground(s) for PNOC-EDC's action.

Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - May 22, 2007)

WESTERN VISAYAS MEDICAL CENTER
Mandurriao, Iloilo City
Fax No. 321-1797
E-mail Address: wvmc@pldtdsl.net

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Department of Health (DOH)—Western Visayas Medical Center through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project

Name of the Project	Supply and delivery of Various Pharmaceuticals
Location	Western Visayas Medical Center
Brief Description	The Bidder shall provide the supply and delivery of Various Pharmaceuticals
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	Php42,974,443.40
Contract Duration	1 year
Delivery Period	Within fifteen days after receipt of each Purchase Order

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the preliminary Examination of Bids shall be non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR)

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows.

Activities	Schedule
1 Issuance of Bid Documents	May 29, 2007 to June 8, 2007
2 Pre-bid Conference	June 11, 2007
Time and Place of Pre-bid Conference	9:00 a.m. Executive Conference Room, WVMC, Iloilo City
3. Submission of Letters of Intent and Application for Eligibility (if single-stage bidding is used, delete this activity)	N/A
4. Opening of Bids	June 26, 2007
Time and Place of the Opening of Bids	9:00 a.m. Executive Conference Room, WVMC, Iloilo City
5. Bid Evaluation	July 07, 2007
6. Post-qualification	July 13, 2007
7. Notice of Award	July 30, 2007

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Php 3,000.00 to the DOH-Western Visayas Medical Center cashier

The DOH-Western Visayas Medical Center assumes no responsibility, whatsoever, to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) FREIDA G. SORONGON, RN, MAN
BAC Chairman

(PDI - May 22, 2007)

Isabela II Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Alibagu, Ilagan, Isabela

INVITATION TO BID

The Isabela II Electric Cooperative, Inc. (ISELCO II) invites Sealed Bids from Eligible Bidders for the:

Supply, Delivery and Installation of a 15kV Recloser, Kyle type NOVA, 3-phase, electronically controlled automatic vacuum interrupter and with Recloser Control, Kyle type Form 6 microprocessor based.

Bidding Documents may be secured from the PBAC Chairman starting May 22, 2007 by any interested Bidder upon submission of a Letter of Intent, Company Profile and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of PhP 10,000.00. Terms and Conditions, including Technical Specifications are specified in the Bidding Document/s.

A Pre-Bid Conference wherein sealed envelopes containing the Technical and Financial Proposals (in separate envelopes duly marked as such) will be received by the PBAC at the Board Room on or before 10:00 a.m., June 6, 2007 at which time and place the technical proposals will be opened and evaluated. The financial proposals of bidders found eligible to bid will then be opened and read in the presence of bidders or representatives the date of which shall be set by the PBAC during the conference. Financial proposals will be returned unopened to ineligible bidders.

All bids submitted must be accompanied by a bid security in cash or cashier's check in the amount equivalent to 10% of the amount of Bid. This bid security will be valid for at least 60 days starting from the date of bid opening.

ISELCO II reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defects or infirmities therein and accept only bid advantageous to the Cooperative.

(Sgd.) LUZVIMINDA L. PANANGUI
PBAC Chairman

Noted by:

(Sgd.) ENGR. MARIANO R. DAYAG, JR.
Acting General Manager

(PDI - May 22 & 26, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S
FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
PHILIPPINE DIAMOND HOTEL & RESTAURANT INC. (DIAMOND HOTEL PHILIPPINES) Roxas Blvd. cor. Dr. Quintos St.,Ermita, Manila	Kazumi Togawa	Japanese Account Manager
AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY, MANILA Level 24 Tower 2 RCBC Plaza, Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Anusha Jodi Zappia	DCP Special Project Officer
EDUNARA, INC. 21/F Strata 2000 Emerald Ave., Ortigas, Pasig City	Sangwoo Lee	Assistant General Manager
EDUNARA, INC. 21/F Strata 2000 Emerald Ave., Ortigas, Pasig City	Ju Hee Lee	Operations Manager
LINGUA FORUM INC.-PHILIPPINES Unit 10A Washington Tower, Asia World City, Parañaque City	Yung Min Yoon	Chief Representative
FORMOSTAR GARMENT (PHILIPPINES) CO., INC. 106 M. Alvarez, Talon V, Las Piñas City	Feng-Chu Wu	Plant Manager
FORMOSTAR GARMENT (PHILIPPINES) CO., INC. 105 M. Alvarez, Talon V, Las Piñas City	Su-Mei Su	Vice Plant Manager
FUJITSU TEN SOLUTIONS PHILIPPINES, INC. 8/F East Tower, PSE Ctr., Ortigas Complex, Pasig City	Takuya Kagawa	Technical Adviser
INFO SOLUTIONS INTERNATIONAL INC. 6/F-B The Palisades, 107 Perea St., Legaspi Village, Makati City	Neil Gordon Lees	Vice President
JFE STEEL CORPORATION 23/F Oledan Square, 6788 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Atsushi Kobayashi	General Manager of Steel Management Group
GREENMAC OVERSEAS ENTERPRISE CORP. Unit B-2 # 190 Gen. Luis St., Novaliches, Quezon City	In Su Kim	Technical Manager
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH Bldg. 3, Department of Health Compound, Rizal Ave., Santa Cruz, Manila	Karl Heinrich Georg Berg	Team Leader
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH Bldg. 3, Department of Health Compound, Rizal Ave., Santa Cruz, Manila	Pablo Vera Alcocer	Key Expert 5 Pharmaceutical Management Specialist
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH Bldg. 3, Department of Health Compound, Rizal Ave., Santa Cruz, Manila	Lluis Vinals Torres	Key Expert 6 Health Financing Specialist
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH Bldg. 3, Department of Health Compound, Rizal Ave., Santa Cruz, Manila	Diane Joan Northway	Key Expert 3 Financial Management Specialist
GREENMAC OVERSEAS ENTERPRISE CORP. Unit B-2 # 190 Gen. Luis St., Novaliches, Quezon City	Yongseon Kim	Marketing Manager
TEDDY7 CORPORATION 6B Edades Dr., North Susana Exec. Village, Matandang Balara, Quezon City	Eunjoung Lee (w/o Lee)	Senior Consultant

If you have any information/objection to the abovementioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

The DOLE conducts free seminar on Labor-Human Relations and Productivity. For more information, please call 339-2013 & 303-9920.

LOURDES M. TRASMONTE
Regional Director

(PDI – May 22, 2007)

65 dead as Lebanon troops, militants clash

LEBANON—LEBANESE TANKS shelled Islamist militants in a Palestinian refugee camp on Monday and at least eight civilians were killed, raising the death toll in two days of fighting to 65, security sources said.

Tanks pounded the coastal camp of Nahr al-Bared, home to some 40,000 refugees in north Lebanon, as fighters of the al-Qaida-inspired Fatah al-Islam group fired grenades and machine guns at army posts on the perimeter, witnesses said.

Palestinian sources in the camp said the bombardment had killed eight civilians and wounded 20. They feared the toll would rise because rescue workers could not reach some areas.

Sunday's battles at Nahr al-Bared and in the nearby city of Tripoli killed 27 soldiers, 15 militants and 15 civilians—Lebanon's worst internal fighting since the 1975-1990 civil war.

The violence showed how fragile security remains in Lebanon, racked by political and sectarian tensions since last year's Israeli-Hezbollah war in the south and by a series of unsolved assassinations before and after Syria's 2005 troop pullout.

Tripoli, Lebanon's second biggest city, was quiet but schools and universities were closed following the previous day's street battles with militants holed up in buildings.

Schools also shut in the sprawling Ain al-Hilweh camp near the southern city of Sidon in protest at the fighting in the north. Militants of Jund al-Sham, another pro-Qaida group, went on alert in the camp, Palestinian security sources said.

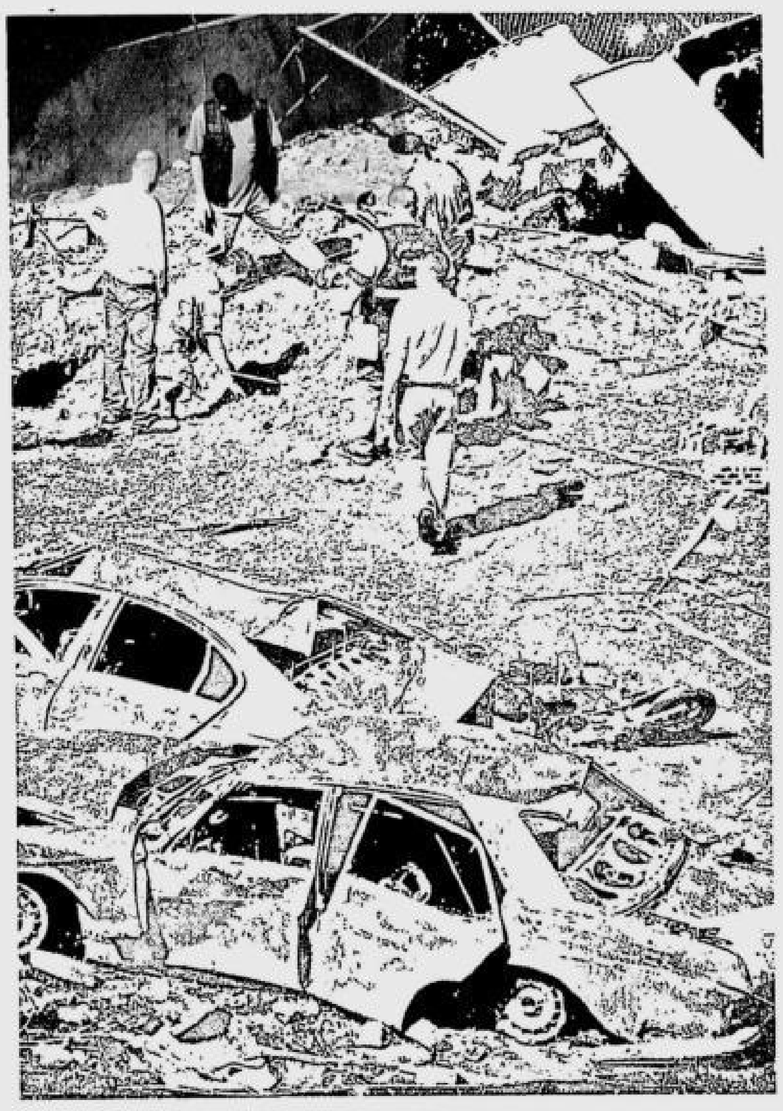
Lebanese Red Cross ambulances evacuated 20 wounded from Nahr al-Bared overnight, following an appeal for humanitarian access.

Witnesses said mosque imams called by loudspeakers for the army to stop shelling the camp, one of a dozen across Lebanon.

They host about 400,000 Palestinian refugees, part of an exodus prompted by the 1948 war that followed Israel's creation.

In Beirut, an explosion near a popular shopping mall in the mainly Christian east of the capital killed a woman and wounded 10 people on Sunday night, a security source said.

No group has claimed the attack and it was not clear if it was linked to the fighting in the north. Four Fatah al-Islam members were charged with bombings near Beirut earlier this year. *Reuters*



LEBANESE policemen inspect the site of a bomb blast in a Christian quarter in Beirut, May 21, where a 63-year-old woman was killed and 10 people wounded. AFP

Israel threatens to assassinate Hamas leaders

A MEMBER of Israel's security Cabinet warned May 21 that Israel would liquidate Damascus-based Hamas supremo Khaled Meshaal (above) "at the first opportunity." AFP

GAZA CITY—ISRAEL THREATENED on Monday to hit Hamas political leaders unless rocket fire from lawless Gaza subsides, as nine more people were killed in air raids against the impoverished territory.

The Jewish state is ready to kill exiled Hamas political supremo Khaled Meshaal "at the first opportunity" and could also target Prime Minister Ismail Haniya, warned Public Security Minister Avi Dichter, a member of Israel's powerful security cabinet.

Meshaal, who is now based in Syria, survived a Mossad assassination attempt in Jordan in 1997. Haniya escaped an Israeli strike in Gaza in 2004 that killed Hamas' wheelchair-bound founder and spiritual leader, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin.

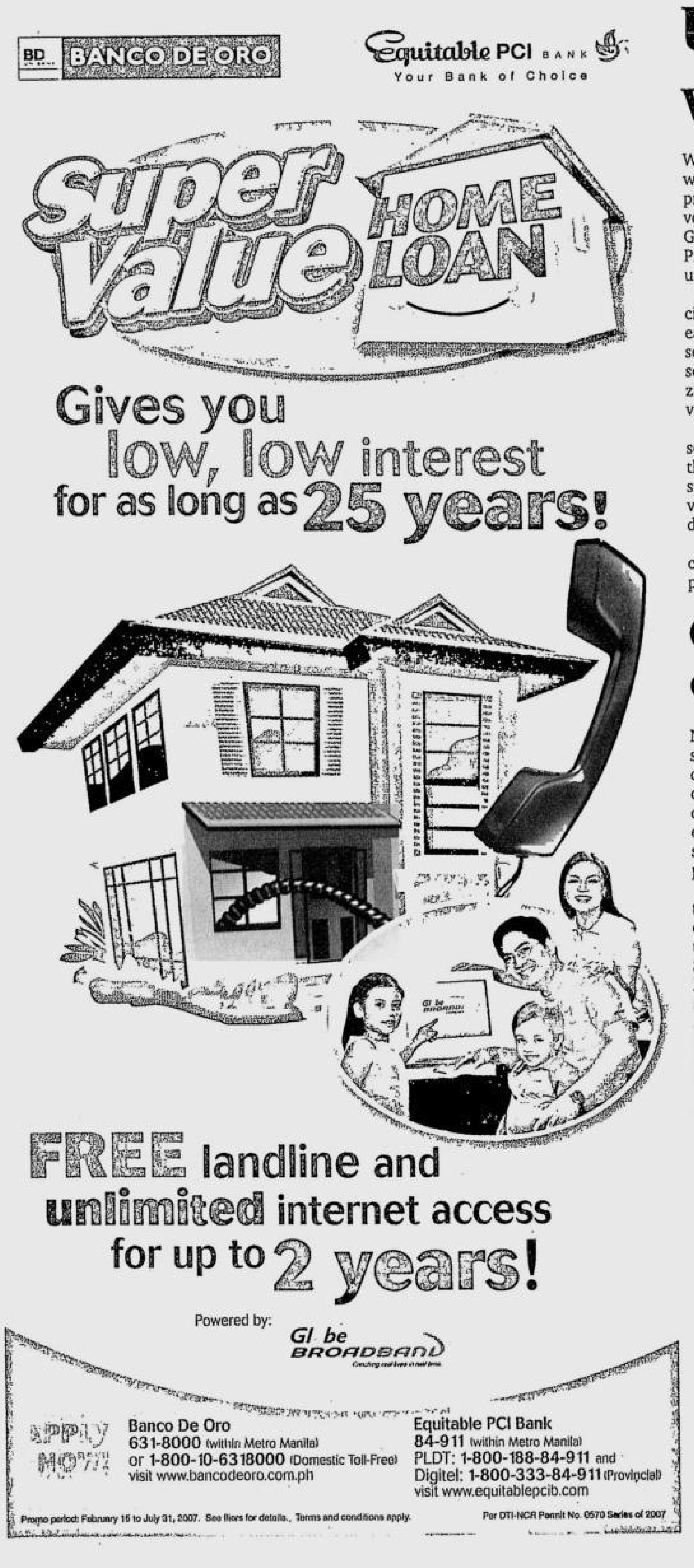
"He (Meshaal) is a more than legitimate target and I am convinced that at the first opportunity we will rid ourselves of him, despite the difficulty of the task," Dichter told army radio.

Asked whether the Hamas prime minister could also be a target, Dichter said: "If Haniya is part of those who give the orders to carry out attacks, that will make him a legitimate target." Several other key ministers have made similar comments.

The warnings came a day after the security cabinet ordered a stepping up of operations against the Islamists in the face of continuing rocket fire from Gaza, but stopped short of ordering a major ground offensive.

"All those implicated in terrorism are in our sights, including those who present themselves as political leaders," government spokeswoman Miri Eisin told AFP.

Israel has pounded Hamas targets across Gaza since Wednesday in response to a sharp increase in rocket fire from the territory. The strikes have so far killed 11 civilians and 21 Hamas militants. *AFP*



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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0570 Series of 2007

US Senate readies no-confidence vote in bid to oust key Bush aide

WASHINGTON—THE US SENATE was preparing to take the almost unprecedented move of a no-confidence vote on US Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, ramping up pressure on President George W. Bush to sack his unpopular longtime aide.

After weeks of allegations of politicizing the justice system and, in his earlier position as White House counsel, trying to strong-arm his predecessor at the Department of Justice, Gonzales could face the extremely rare vote in the coming week.

It would be only symbolic, but with several Republicans likely to support the measure, one key lawmaker spoke Sunday of "the likelihood of a very substantial vote of no-confidence" against Gonzales.

"You already have six Republicans calling for his resignation," said Republican Senator Arlen Specter on CBS television Sunday.

He added that the desire to avoid a political spectacle may convince Gonzales to resign.

"I have a sense ... that before the vote is taken, that Attorney General Gonzales may step down," said Specter, the top Republican on the Senate Judiciary Committee.

A vote against one of the president's closest confidants—Gonzales advised Bush when he was Texas governor in the 1990s—could deliver yet another heavy blow to the White House.

It would come in the wake of the Bush-chosen World Bank president Paul Wolfowitz, who helped plan the war in Iraq earlier as Deputy Secretary of Defense, being ousted in a rebellion by bank staff.

Democratic Senator Chuck Schumer, a key Gonzales opponent, rejected criticism that the no-confidence vote amounted to a political stunt, and said it reflected the will of the US public.

"The only person who thinks the attorney general should remain the attorney general is the president," he told Fox News television Sunday.

Gonzales' troubles began in February because of his firings last year of eight federal prosecutors, allegedly for partisan political reasons, and revelations that as many as 30 had been considered for dismissal.

The sackings, while legal, had the appearance of a political purge, and e-mail messages hinted they had been orchestrated by the White House.

Gonzales then outraged Congress when, questioned in a hearing on the firings, he repeatedly responded that he "can't recall." Democratic Senator Dianne Feinstein criticized Gonzales' "weak" overall performance as the top US law enforcement officer. *AFP*

Gunman in Idaho sprays court with dozens of bullets

MOSCOW, IDAHO—A SNIPER sprayed dozens of bullets on a courthouse, killing a police officer and wounding a sheriff's deputy and a civilian, then apparently killed a caretaker and himself Sunday in a nearby church, police said.

Investigators believe the shooter deliberately fired into an emergency dispatch center inside the Latah County Courthouse late Saturday to lure people into the line of fire. The officer was killed as he rushed to the courthouse, and the deputy helped pull the officer out of the way before being shot, said David Duke, Moscow's assistant police chief.

Shortly after 6 a.m., three police commando teams entered the First Presbyterian Church and found the bodies of the shooter and another man, Duke said. An assault rifle, ammunition and spent shells were found next to the gunman's corpse, he said.

The shooter died of what appeared to be a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head, Duke said. His body was found in the sanctuary, and the body of another man was found in the church office. The second man also dead of gunshot wounds, Duke said.

Authorities did not release either man's name, but the church's pastor, Rev. Norman Fowler, identified the victim inside the church as Paul Bauer, a sexton believed to be in his 60s who lived at the church.

Police said the gunman started shooting from a parking lot across the courthouse shortly after 11 p.m. A hail of more than 30 bullets ripped through the county's dispatch center, Duke said. Dispatchers were moved to the jail area of the courthouse.

"Whoever the shooter is wanted to draw people to the courthouse," Duke said. "When officers responded, he did open fire on them."

Lee Newbill, the first officer at the scene, was hit around 11:35 p.m. Saturday, Duke said. Newbill had served with the police department since March 2001 and is the city's first officer killed in the line of duty.

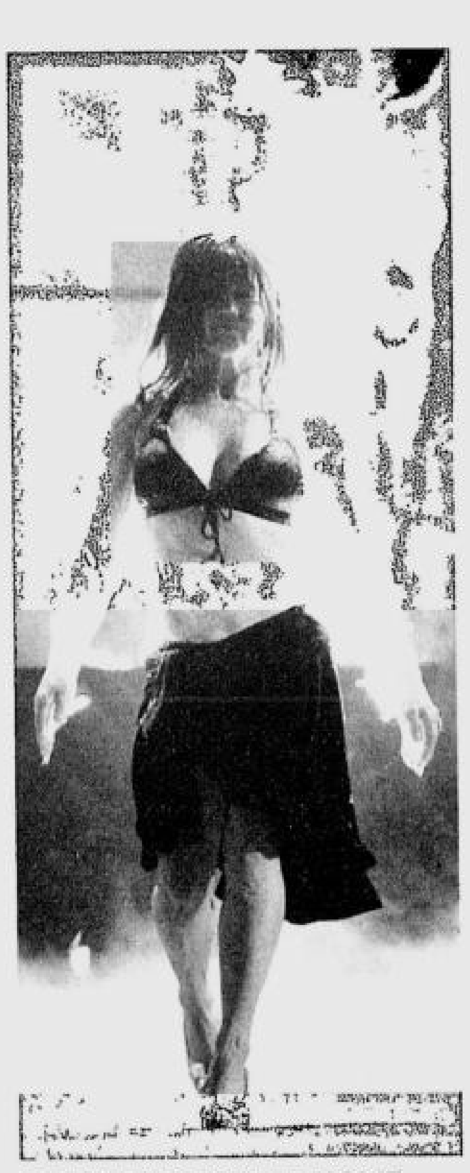
Deputy Brannon Jordon, a 17-year veteran, was shot shortly after midnight as he took cover behind a tree after pulling Newbill out of the line of fire, Duke said. Jordon was in serious condition with multiple gunshot wounds, the assistant chief said.

Authorities did not release the name of the injured civilian, but said he lived in the neighborhood and had gone outside after hearing the gunshots. The man was undergoing surgery and was in stable condition.

Police had no information about the gunman's motive.

"He was just shooting at anybody he could," Duke said.

Moscow, a community of about 20,000 people, is 80 miles (129 kilometers) south of Spokane, Wash. *AP*



DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME
A professional stunt artist performs during the 2007 Taurus World Stunt Awards at Paramount Studios in Los Angeles, May 20. The show honors the most outstanding stunt professionals from all over the world. REUTERS

SPORTS

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Vellum riders strike in team time trial A22

Far from best form, RP five settles for 4th

Qataris blast Filipinos by 20

Final standings—1. Saba Battery (Iran); 2. Al Jalaa (Syria); 3 Al Rayyan (Qatar); **4. San Miguel-RP**; 5. Blue Star (Lebanon); 6. Astana Tigers (Kazakhstan); 7. Young Cagers (India); 8. Al Muharraq (Bahrain)

TEHRAN—AT THIS POINT, WE are very far from the best Asian teams.

This was how coach Chot Reyes rated the Philippine quintet that wound up in fourth place after taking a 95-75 loss from Qatar's Al Rayyan Sunday in the Fiba Asia Champions Cup at the Azadi Stadium here.

Saba Battery later held off Syria's Al Jalaa, 83-75, to secure host Iran's first ever crown in Asia's premier club championship.

The Filipinos, playing under the banner of San Miguel Corp., actually improved on their fifth place in 2005, but Reyes said his boys have a long way to go in their buildup for the Fiba Asia Championship in July where they hope to secure a slot in next year's Beijing Olympics.

CHOT REYES: Lessons learned

"The number one lesson is the realization that we are, at this point, very far from the best Asian teams," said Reyes of the all-pro RP squad, which finished with two wins against five losses in a tournament where its taller, heftier rivals enjoyed the services of two imports each.

"If the Fiba Asia were played today, our chances would be very slim. At the same time, however, it is good that we learned these lessons now while we still have two months to improve.

"At the end of our game, I just asked each player to think long and hard about where he is at this point and where he wants to be come July 28 (the start of the Fiba Asia in Tokushima, Japan). Only when each individual improves will the team improve."

The Nationals now focus their attention on the Seaba championship set May 24-28 in Ratchaburri, Thailand, which is the qualifier for the Fiba Asia.

After the Seaba, where the Filipinos are overwhelming favorites, they resume their training by attending a basketball camp in Belgrade on June 12-20.

The Nationals actually held their own in the first half against the Qataris, who boast of seven-foot import Jacob Nonemacher and a host of naturalized players.

The Qataris were also playing only their fifth game in nine playdates and this showed in the way they repeatedly beat the Filipinos in transition and hustle plays.

The Filipinos' shooting was also off although the Qataris managed to pull away for good only after unleashing a 17-5 run in the third period that staked them to a 67-44 lead.

Realizing the Filipinos' cause was hopeless, Reyes concentrated on perfecting their set plays.

The scores:

QATAR 95—Musa 26, Ali 20, A. Ali 12, Abdi 10, Saeed 10, Mohammed 6, Nonemacher 5, Salem 0.

SAN MIGUEL-RP 75—Ritualo 18, Honliveros 16, Seigle 12, Caguioa 8, Alapag 7, Raymundo 7, Pennisi 6, Taulava 1, De Ocampo 0, Villanueva 0, Helterbrand 0.

Quarters: 20-19; 44-35; 71-52; 95-75

Gregorio set to get key SBP position

By June Navarro

A FORMER T.O.Y.M. AWARDEE WHO MADE his mark in the tourism industry is expected to be confirmed this Thursday as the executive director of the BAP-Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas.

Sources said the appointment of Patrick Gregorio, a personal choice of BAP-SBP president Manny V. Pangilinan, is "a done deal" and will merely be formalized during the association's board meeting.

"The board will go through the process of confirming the recommendation of Mr. Pangilinan," said membership and nominations committee chair Ely Capacio. "If the chosen candidate fails to get the nod of the board, we will again begin the process by selecting another set of candidates for the position."

Pangilinan had all but decided who will run the day-to-day affairs of the national association for basketball when he announced his choice of Gregorio early this month.

A Ten Outstanding Young Men (TOYM) awardee in 2003, Gregorio has over 18 years of experience in the tourism industry.

He is the executive director of North Philippines Visit Bureau, a tourism consultant of the Manila North Tollways Corporation (MNTC) and is currently chief marketing officer of Microtel Inns and Suites (Philippines) Inc.

Gregorio, 39, played for the UP Integrated School (high school) in the UAAP juniors back in the 1980s and finished his BS Tourism degree at UP Diliman.

He is known in basketball circles as the eldest brother of PBA coaches Ryan and Alan Gregorio. Ryan is the head coach of the Purefoods Hotdogs while Alan acts as the deputy of head coach Bo Perasol at Air21.

"I've already proposed a shortlist of three candidates for executive director," said Capacio.

Included in the list are Ateneo's Junjun Capistrano and National Athletic Association of Schools Colleges and Universities president Jay Adalem.

After Pangilinan presents his pick, the 25-man board will then move to confirm Gregorio's appointment.

PadyakPinoy
SUMMER SHOWDOWN 2007

TEAM - OVERALL STAGE RESULTS
Stage 5 - Vigan City - Laoag City

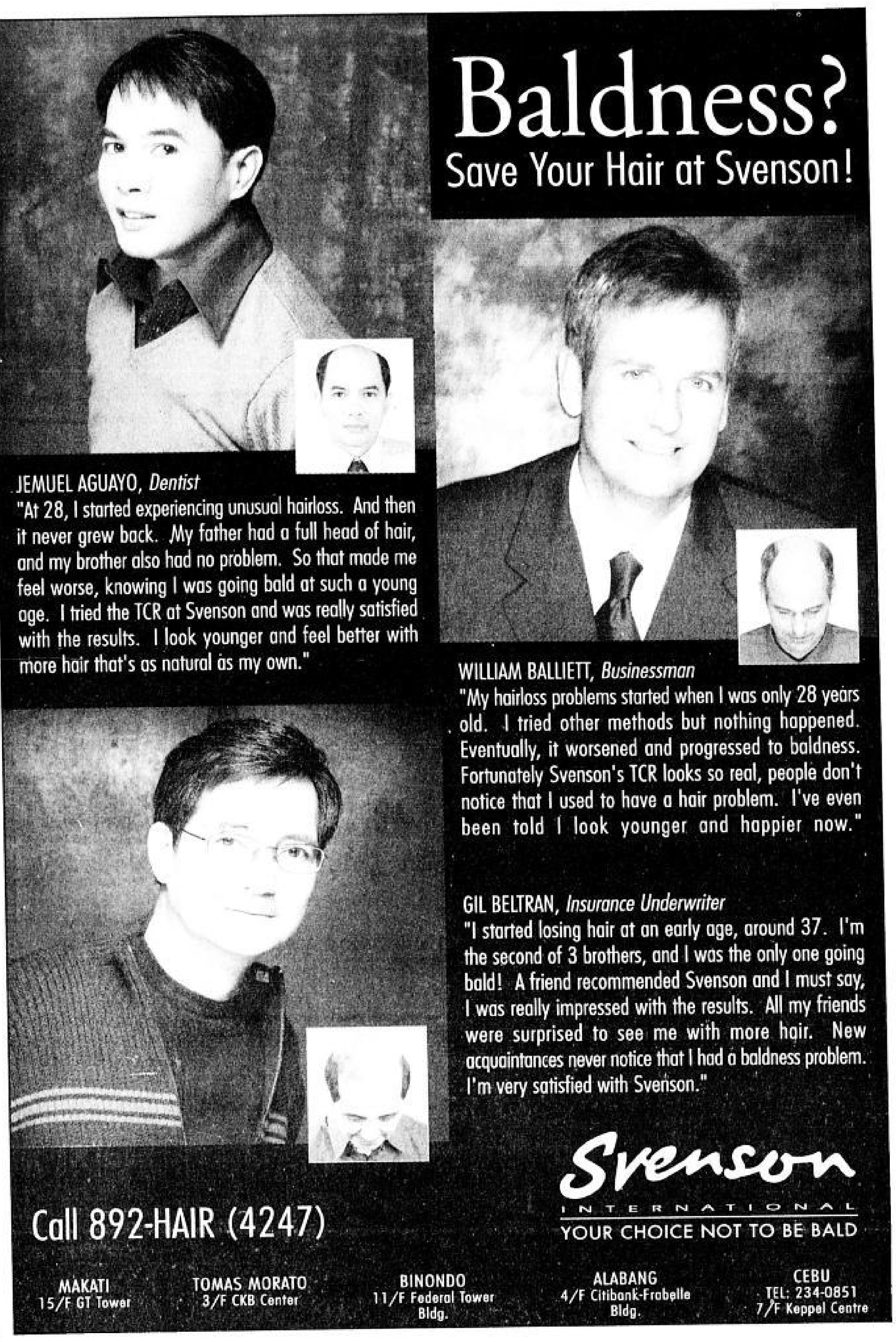
1.	VELLUM CYCLES	55h33'27.431"
2.	COSSACK VODKA	55h35'24.480"
3.	COOL PAP The Extra Strength Sports Plaster	55h38'00.770"
4.	Mail & More	55h38'30.500"
5.	Champion	55h38'52.691"
6.	CALTEX	55h42'02.572"
7.	WOW!	55h55'34.910"
8.	AIR21	55h58'11.779"
9.	[illegible]	56h02'57.513"
10.	Bacchus	56h04'54.554"
11.	CARGOHAUS	56h16'31.795"
12.	VisMin SELECTION	57h19'05.241"

www.padyakpinoy.com.ph

OVERALL INDIVIDUAL - STAGE RESULTS

PL	NO	NAME	TEAM	TIMED		DEFICIT
1	41	QUIRIMIT, ARNEL	MAIL & MORE	13h24'00"	13h24'00"	00h00'00
2	102	RAVINA, BALER	COOL PAP	13h25'52"	13h25'52"	00h1'52"
3	11	FELICIANO, FREDERICK	VELLUM	13h26'12"	13h26'12"	00h02'11"
4	31	SAMBRANO, RENATO	COSSACK	13h26'22"	13h26'22"	00h02'21"
5	9	ATILANO, EMELITO	CARGOHAUS	13h26'54"	13h26'54"	00h02'54"
6	35	VALENZUELA, IRISH	COSSACK	13h26'56"	13h26'56"	00h02'55"
7	61	ESPIRITU, VICTOR	WOW	13h28'49"	13h28'49"	00h04'48"
8	1	BARNACHEA, SANTY	CHAMPION	13h28'59"	13h28'59"	00h04'58"
9	53	HARDIN, DESI	CALTEX	13h29'25"	13h29'25"	00h05'25"
10	21	OBOSA, ERICSON	BACCHUS	13h30'22"	13h30'22"	00h06'21"
11	10	LUZON, BERNARD	COOL PAP	13h30'32"	13h30'32"	00h06'31"
12	71	RAMOS, MERCULIO	U-FREIGHT	13h30'33"	13h30'33"	00h06'32"

TANDUAY AIR21
Dynamic Outsource Solutions 1, Inc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GIL BELTRAN, *Insurance Underwriter*
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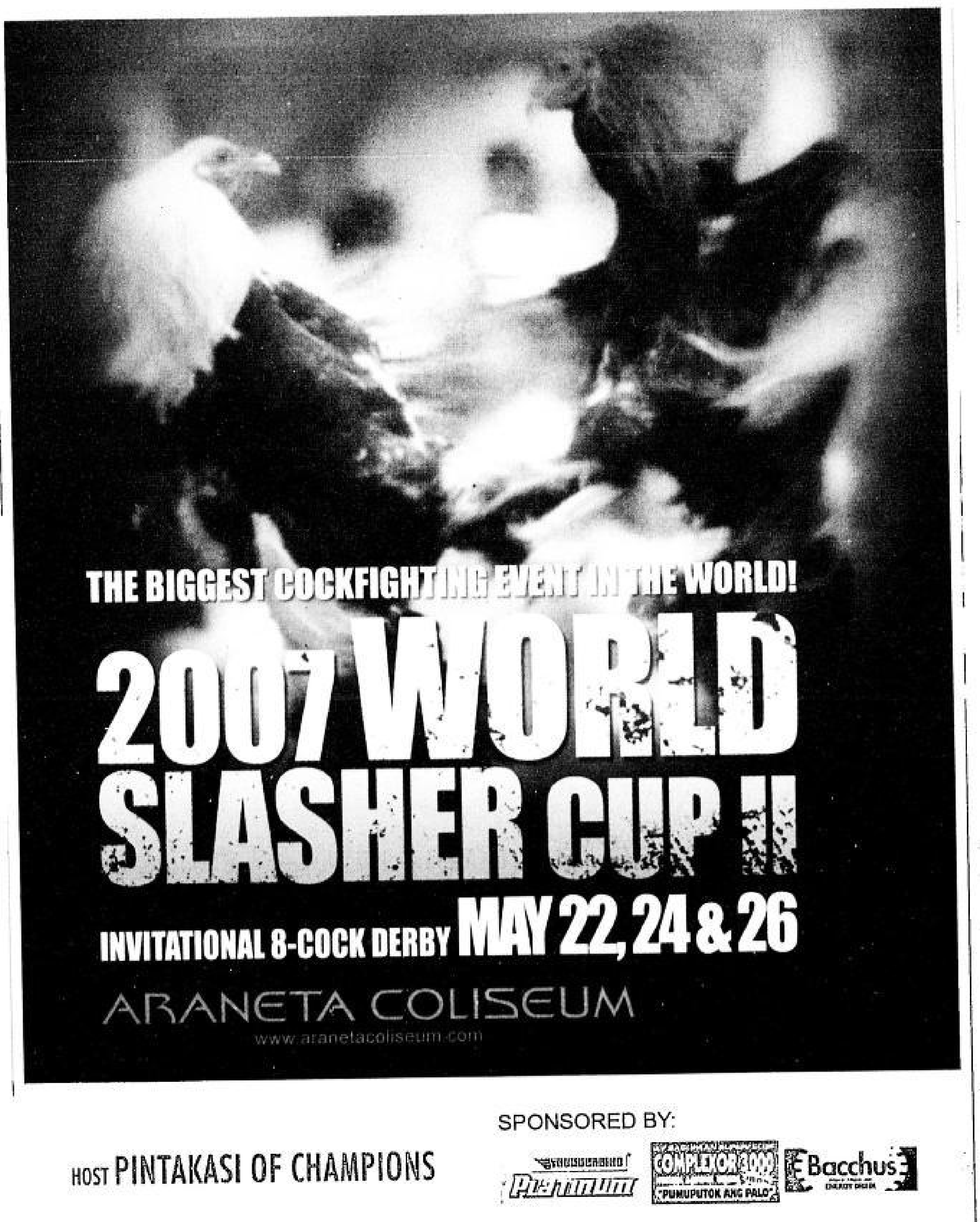
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RP jins bow to superior foes; Go, 2 others get going today

BEIJING—YOUTHFUL JINS SUGAR CATALAN, Criselda Roxas, Michael Realista and Jeffrey Figueroa fell like dominoes on a bleak day for the Philippine squad in the 2007 World Taekwondo Championships at the Changping Gym here.

Of the three, though, it was Catalan who came close to scoring a victory. She dropped a nail-biting 8-9 decision to Russian Anna Soboleva in the flyweight competition.

Catalan, a spunky, 5-foot-2 bundle of energy, was actually tied with Soboleva, 8-all, in with five seconds left when the two figured in a fierce final exchange at the center mat.

After the Russian scored another point, time ran out on Catalan's last surge.

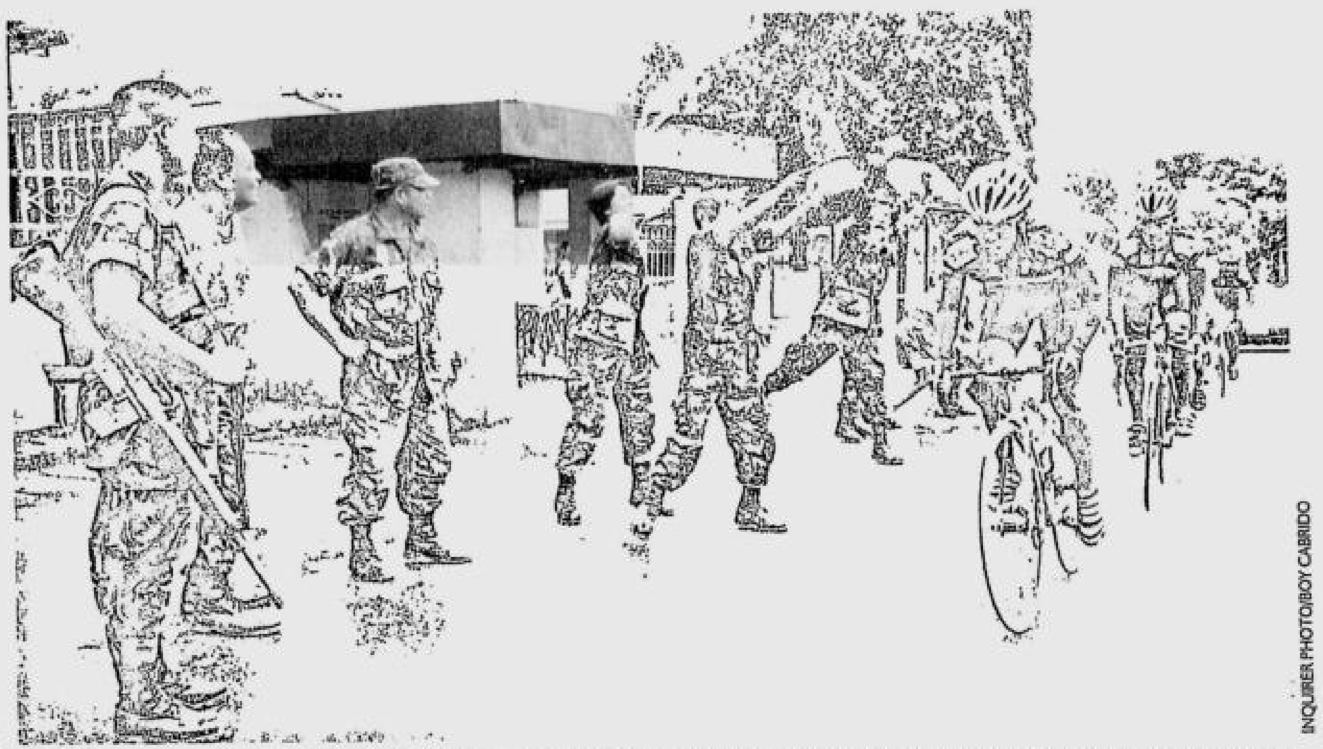
"When the judges pressed their machines to give Sugar a point in the exchange, time had run out," said women's team coach Rocky Samson.

Welterweight Realista bowed to Iranian Mehdi Bibak, 2-8; flyweight Figueroa was blanked by eventual champion Juan Ramos of Spain, 0-6; while middleweight Roxas was shut out by Cuban Mima Samuel, 0-7.

"The young members of the team are getting valuable experience from this event," said delegation head Jobet Morales III.

Out to stop the bleeding today are bantamweight Tshomlee Go, lightweight Veronica Domingo and heavyweight Michael Alejandrino.

Go, a Doha Asian Games silver medalist, clashes with Latvian Denis Sisojevs; Alejandrino takes on Italy's Basile Leonardo and Domingo fights Josipa Kusanic of Croatia.


INQUIRER PHOTO/BOY CABRIDO

ARMY troopers of the 50th Infantry Battalion give riders of the Vis-Min Team a refreshing welcome in San Juan, Ilocos Sur.

Vellum tops team time trial for lead

By Musong R. Castillo

LAOAG CITY—BLESSED WITH BETTER and more modern equipment, Vellum's crack squad ruled yesterday's Team Time Trial from storm-lashed Vigan to this bustling city and wrested the overall leadership from Cossack Vodka halfway through the 10-stage 2007 Tanduay Padyak Pinoy.

Frederick Feliciano led Vellum to a day-best 1-hour, 48-minute and 51.01-second clocking for the 83-kilometer journey that had the teams negotiating a slick course after a strong dawn downpour whipped the charming vintage city and caused a city-wide brownout.

The Vellum skipper, who is third in the overall individual race, rode an expensive, carbon fiber bike like assistant Eusebio Quinones as Vellum nipped Santy Barnachea's Champion squad by just over a second for lap honors.

With a total time of 55:33:27.431, Vellum took a lead of 1 minute and 57.049 seconds ahead of the Renato Dolosa-coached Cossack team which is trying to repeat even without a certified star on its roster.

"We finally got what we have been longing for," Vellum coach Cesar Lobramonte said in Filipino. "And the equipment that they (riders) are using are of great help, definitely."

Feliciano and Quinones towed Rolando Burgos and Rey Martin in the final four kilometers as the other members of the team simply could not keep pace. Tournament rules used the team's fourth-best time as the team time for the day.

"I got nervous near the final part (of the stage) because there were only four of us left," Feliciano, the runner-up to Barnachea last year, said. "It's a good thing that we were able to stay together until the finish."

Vellum has been labeled as the team to beat, its first six riders all belonging to the Philippine training pool. And being equipped with disc wheels, aero bars and bike frames not exceeding 10-lbs in weight certainly helped.

"It's good that they only lead us by (close to) two minutes," Dolosa told the INQUIRER in Filipino. "I still have faith in my riders. Had it been a team with a lesser heart, the mere sight of those modern equipment would have scared them away.

"But my team has the heart and the desire," the 1992 and 1995 champion added. "The biggest challenge is still to come, and that is (the) Baguio (stages). I'm still confident."

Wow Magic Sing, captained by Victor Espiritu, finished third for the day, 38 seconds behind, after encountering trouble near the halfway mark as two of its riders—Harvey Sicam and John Ricafort—figuring in spills on slippery curves.

"We easily lost one minute because of those spills," Norberto Oconer, Espiritu's former RP Team skipper, said in Filipino. "We could have easily topped the lap."

Cool Pap, which had the lead after the third stage, slid to third spot, 4:33.338 off the pace after finishing fourth yesterday in 1:50:56.01.

Mail & More, overall individual leader Arnel Quirimit's team, was seventh for the lap and dropped to fourth overall, now 5:03 behind, from just over two minutes at the start of the day.

The 11-day Tour takes a much-needed breather today before it tackles the 213-km Laoag City-to-San Fernando, La Union route.

The bikathon goes to Baguio for the first time on Thursday with the crucial Baguio-to-Baguio stage, the race that usually decides the championship, set the next day.

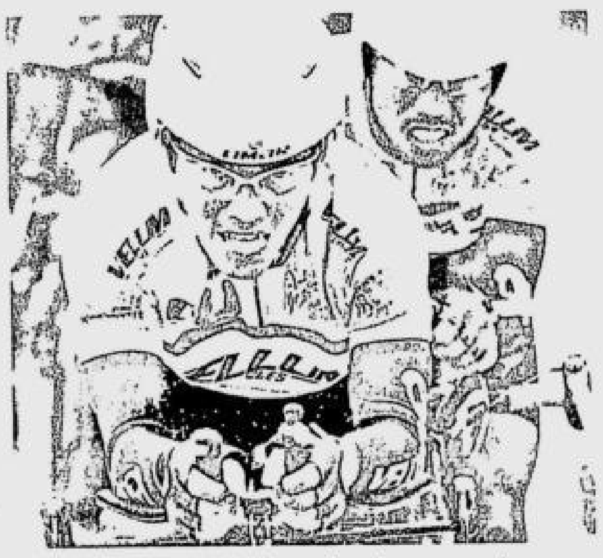
STAGE 5: Vigan City to Laoag City (83 km)

TEAM TIME TRIAL
STAGE TEAM RESULT

1. Vellum—1 hour, 48 minutes, 51.010 seconds
2. Champion—01:49:52.280
3. Wow Magic Sing—01:50:29.030
4. Cool Pap, 01:50:56.010
5. Caltex, 01:50.58.850
6. Cossack Vodka, 01:51:45.100
7. Mail & More, 01:53:06.900
8. AIR21, 01:53:08.680
9. Bacchus, 01:53:11.250
10. Cargohaus, 01:55:25.410
11. U-Freight, 01:56:04.820
12. Vis-Min Team, 01:58:27.580

OVERALL TEAM STANDINGS

1. Vellum, 55 hours, 33 minutes, 27.431 seconds
2. Cossack Vodka, 55:35:24.480
3. Cool Pap, 55:38:00.770.
4. Mail & More, 55:38:30.500
5. Champion, 55:38:52.691
6. Caltex, 55:42:02.572
7. Wow Magic Sing, 55:34:34.910
8. Air21, 55:58:11.779
9. U-Freight, 56:02:57.513
10. Bacchus, 56:04:54.554
11. Cargohaus, 56:16:31.795
12. Vis-Min Team, 57:19:05.241


SKIPPER Frederick Feliciano (front) sets a searing pace for Vellum in Badoc, Ilocos Norte. INQUIRER PHOTO/BOY CABRIDO

RP five should put Olympic plan on hold

CLEAN LIVIN

Manolo R. Iñigo

WHY ARE WE SO OBSESSED WITH a sport that promises us nothing?

After that failed campaign by the highly funded SMC-Philippine team in 18th Fiba-Asia Champions Cup in Tehran, I am repeating my appeal to sports officials to rethink their priorities and accept the truth that basketball is not the sport for Filipinos.

Instead, the huge budget of P70 million earmarked for the Olympic preparation of the national cagers should have been spent more wisely to promote the other sports where height is not an advantage like boxing, taekwondo, archery and football.

We are dreaming of participating in the 2008 Beijing Olympics but it is not within our capacity.

"We should know by now our limitations," said retired Col. Julian Malonso, the former POC (Philippine Olympic Committee) president, in an interview. "Other countries, particularly the Middle East countries, have improved tremendously while the Philippines has remained stagnant."

* * *

Even PBA commissioner Noli Eala agreed with Malonso's observation. Said he: "No excuses. There's obviously much to be done. We're still a long way off."

Eala, however, made it clear that the "league remains in support of the basketball program prepared by national coach Chot Reyes for the all-pro aiming to return to the Olympics next year in Beijing."

The last time the Philippines qualified for the Olympics was in 1972 in Munich.

Unless we have a tall, fast and hefty team, our chances are very, very slim in future international tournaments, including the Olympics.

In the just-ended Fiba-Asia Champions Cup in Tehran, the tallest Filipino center is 6-foot-9 Asi Taulava of Talk 'N Text. Yet he was much shorter compared with the other centers of our rivals who were all seven footers or taller.

* * *

Times have changed. The Philippines has not even beaten China in the Asian Games. On the other hand, China, despite the presence of NBA superstar Yao Ming, was a big letdown in the last World Basketball Championship won by Spain.

Yao said he was worried for China in particular, and Asia in general, stressing that both "will fall farther behind the global basketball powers unless new talents are developed so the region can keep pace with the worldwide boom in the sport."

Yao, the popular Chinese cager who now plays for the Houston Rockets, said that even the best collection of National Basketball Association stars went for naught. "Europe and South America have some good players coming out."

* * *

Having said that, it is my humble opinion that RP basketball officials should put on hold their grandiose plan of competing in the Olympics.

Gone are the good old days of Caloy Loyzaga and Lauro Mumar and, lately, of Robert Jaworski, when the Philippines was always assured of making an impact and, in most cases, winning a medal from a regional tournament. Sad to say, that golden era is now gone.

To make matters worse, there is a lack of total commitment from many national players. It's a pity to see that most of them are not giving their best when they compete in an international tournament.

Are they afraid of hurting themselves and risking a career in the Philippine Basketball Association?

(To be continued)

RIVIERA GOLF CLUB, INC.
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NOTICE OF SALE OF DELINQUENT RGCI SHARES AT AUCTION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE RIVIERA GOLF CLUB, INC. (RGCI) WILL SELL THE FOLLOWING DELINQUENT SHARES AT A PUBLIC AUCTION PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF THE BY-LAWS, FOR NON-PAYMENT OF THE MONTHLY DUES AND OTHER ASSESSMENTS:

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A-1492
A-1634
A-1462
A-0038
A-1489
A-0696
A-1596
A-0274
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C-0216
A-0821
A-1259
A-1321
A-1623
A-0596
A-1076
A-0561
A-1830
A-0531
A-0335
B-0315
C-0210
A-0143
A-0763
A-0379
A-0236
A-1703
A-0759
A-1620
A-1758
A-0758
A-1226
B-0177
A-1668
A-1695
A-1325
A-1749
A-0224
A-1678
A-0627
A-1812
A-1081
B-0068
B-0123
A-1555
A-0214
A-1456
A-1582
A-0676
A-0565
A-0539
A-0431
A-0176
B-0415
B-0016
A-1417
A-1646
A-0221
A-0826
A-0258
A-1363
A-1169
A-1474
A-1032
B-0264
C-0248
A-1670
A-1814
A-0164
A-0829
A-0499
A-0464
A-1251
A-1442
A-0849
B-0433
C-0298
A-0109
A-1441
A-1155
A-1402
A-1079
A-1061
A-1472
A-0697
A-1140
B-0185
C-0095

THE AUCTION DATE IS SET ON MAY 25, 2007 AT 10:00 A.M., AT THE TEE PAVILION, RIVIERA GOLF CLUB, INC., SILANG, CAVITE. ALL INTERESTED PARTIES MAY PARTICIPATE IN THE BIDDING.

BY AUTHORITY OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

(Sgd.) ATTY. ROLANDO G. BORJA
CORPORATE SECRETARY

(PDI - May 22, 2007)

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The DEVELOPMENT BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES invites bids and offers to buy its various old/unneeded properties to wit:

	QTY.	ITEM DESCRIPTION	FLOOR PRICE
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2.	2 units	MITSUBISHI Lancer GLI, Model 1995, Plate Nos. SEF-354 and SEF-388	140,000.00/unit
3.	3 units	HONDA Civic LXI, Model 1996, Plate Nos. SEF-680, SEF-891 and UKH-809	220,000.00/unit
4.	2 units	TOYOTA Tamaraw FX, Model 1996, Plate Nos. SEF-323 and SEF-525	150,000.00/unit
5.	2 units	PROTON Wira Car, Model 1997, Plate Nos. SEU-940 and SEU-930	130,000.00/unit
6.	3 units	TOYOTA Tamaraw FX, Model 1994, Plate Nos. SEB-689, SEB-885 and SEB-982	130,000.00/unit
7.	1 unit	TOYOTA Tamaraw FX, Model 1994, Plate No. SEB-992	90,000.00
8.	2 units	TOYOTA Tamaraw FX, Model 1996, Plate Nos. SEF-515 and SEF-573	150,000.00/unit
9.	1 unit	PROTON Wira 4-D Sedan, Model 1997, Plate No. SEU-927	30,000.00
10.	1 unit	MITSUBISHI L-200 Pick-up, Model 1993 Plate No. SDX-404	80,900.00
11.	1 unit	FORD EXPEDITION SUV, Model 2000, Plate No. SHP-845 (MCR-105)	475,000.00
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13.	1 unit	HONDA Civic VTec Car, Model 1997, Plate No. UPP-682	210,000.00
14.	1 lot	Scrap Paper, including old records/files	17,400.00
15.	1 unit	Engine Driven Chiller, 500 tons capacity, water cooled type, R-717/R-22 refrigerant, complete with accessories*	346,200.00
16.	1 lot	Defective Personal Computers (approx. 189 units)	1,890.00
17.	1 lot	Used/unneeded/unserviceable Table	25,000.00
18.	1 lot	Unneeded/unserviceable Steel Chair (55 units)	550.00
19.	1 lot	Defective UPS (9 units)	90.00
20.	1 lot	Defective CCTV Camera (6 units)	120.00
21.	1 lot	Unneeded/unserviceable Steel Filing Cabinet (42 units)	8,400.00
22.	1 lot	Defective Projector (10 units)	100.00
23.	1 lot	Defective Postage Meter (4 units)	40.00
24.	1 lot	Defective Camera	20.00
25.	1 lot	Defective NCR Check/Image Sorter/Reader (32 units)	3,200.00
26.	1 lot	Defective Perforator (6 units)	60.00
27.	1 lot	Old/Unneeded Fire Extinguisher (approx. 200 kgs.)	1,800.00
28.	1 lot	Defective Mimegraph/Ditto Duplicator (4 units)	300.00
29.	1 unit	Telex Magnabyte, PN-58394	20.00
30.	1 lot	Defective Time Machine (18 units)	90.00
31.	2 units	Defective Shredding Machine, PN-27222 and 59557	500.00
32.	1 unit	Defective Roneo Mimeo Machine, PN-61021	200.00
33.	1 lot	Defective Bundy Clock (12 units)	60.00
34.	1 unit	Defective Packet Switch, PN-57775	500.00
35.	1 lot	Defective Vacuum Cleaner (9 units)	180.00
36.	1 lot	Defective Floor Polisher (18 units)	1,800.00
37.	1 unit	Defective Line Printer, TALLY, PN-64014	3,500.00
38.	1 unit	Defective Motorized Treadmill Machine, PN-64587	6,000.00
39.	1 lot	Defective Check Reader, PN-64038, 64039, 64040 and 64041	4,000.00
40.	1 unit	Defective Plate Maker, PN-55501	1,500.00
41.	1 unit	Defective 4361 M05 Processor, PN-48754	500.00
42.	1 lot	Defective Radio Transciever/ Mobile Station and accessories	200.00
43.	1 lot	Various Defective/Junk Equipment (Typewriters, cameras, punchers, computer accessories, emergency lights, amplifiers, perculators, bill counters, modems, etc.)	2,000.00

The above properties are available for inspection at DBP Head Office, Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City and DBP Doña Severina Warehouse, Km. 16, Severina Industrial Estate, South Superhighway, Parañaque City from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Details, Bidding Rules and Bid Forms are available from the following:

MR. C. S. GATDULA
Tel. No. 818-9511
Local - 2000/2001

MR. A. S. BABAAN
Tel. No. 818-9511
Local - 2000/2001

Submission of sealed bids will be on June 4, 2007, 10:00 a.m., Property Management Unit, Property & Security Management, 6th Floor, DBP Building, Sen. Gil J. Puyat cor. Makati Avenue, Makati City.

(Sgd.) EDUARDO T. MENDOZA
First Vice President

(PDI - May 22, 2007)

PVF unhappy with beach volley funding for Fil-Ams

By Marc Anthony Reyes

FIL-AMERICANS BEACH VOLLEYBELLES HEIDI Ilustre and Diane Pascua are now being supported by Sports Vision in their international campaign and the Philippine Volleyball Federation does not like it.

A sure bet for the Southeast Asian Games this year, the two sneaked into the country over the weekend on their way to the Singapore Sentosa leg of the World Tour where they hope to gain points and boost their qualifying bid for the Beijing Olympics next year.

During their visit, the two reportedly accepted the offer of Sports Vision, which runs the Shakey's V-League, to bankroll their campaign.

PVF president Pete Mendoza said they should have been informed about the financial arrangement since Ilustre and Pascua need the association's endorsement when they compete overseas.

Sports Vision is headed by former PVF official Tony Boy Liao, a board member of the Asian Volleyball Confederation. Efforts to reach him yesterday proved futile.

Mendoza said he was able to talk to the players just before they left and maintained that the beach belles still enjoy the PVF sanction.

"Let's not rock the boat because they are still competing," said Mendoza, who added that the PVF will hold a board meeting tomorrow to discuss the matter.

TOYOTA Balintawak's Chris Baluyot disputes possession with Harbour's Ron Capati and Richard Alonzo. INQUIRER PHOTO / AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Road Kings try to regroup vs Moneymen today

TOYOTA BALINTAWAK AIMS FOR THE NEXT option after the big one slipped away.

After blowing their bid for an outright semifinal stint, the Road Kings take a stab at the quarterfinal bonus against Cebuana Lhuillier-Pera Padala in the PBL Unity Cup today.

The Road Kings, holding a third-best 5-5 card, try to stay ahead of the race for the twice-to-beat advantage in the quarterfinals when they face the Moneymen at 4 p.m. at the Olivarez Sports Center.

Burger King and Henkel Sista clash earlier at 2 p.m., both hoping to also remain in contention for the bonus given to the third and fourth-seeded teams at the end of the elimination round.

Cebuana Lhuillier-Pera Padala and Harbour Centre claimed the two outright semifinal berths with league-leading 8-2 records following Toyota Balintawak's loss to Dazz 'Sang Patak last week.

The Moneymen, however, are not about to slow down as they hope to match the conference-best six straight victories.

"It takes away a bit of the pressure, but we don't want to rest now," said coach Luigi Trillo. "Toyota will be tough with (Joe) Devance around, and there's also (Marvin) Cruz and (Patrick) Cabahug."

The 6-foot-7 Devance, who returned a year after his sensational debut, expects better chemistry with the Road Kings in the remaining games.

STANDINGS	W	L
C. Lhuillier	8	2
Harbour	8	2
Toyota Bal.	5	5
Henkel Sista	4	6
Burger King	4	6
Dazz	3	7
Magnolia	3	7

GAMES TODAY
(Olivarez Sports Center)
2 p.m.—Burger King vs Henkel Sista
4 p.m.—Toyota Balintawak vs CL-Pera Padala

"There's a new coach, new players, so it's just me adjusting to the Philippines again," said the Fil-Am center, the Most Valuable Player in last year's edition. "It doesn't really take too much time, I can adjust to anybody."

The Moneymen rolled to their fifth straight victory with a 95-84 victory over Burger King last Thursday.

Although Dough Kramer, Ken Bono and Macky Escalona are expected to carry the scoring load again for the Moneymen, Trillo hopes to draw another strong performance from his bench.

The Whoppers and the Super Sealers, meanwhile, will try to recover from their recent slumps.

"We have to win at all costs this time if we want to reach the next round," said Burger King coach Lawrence Chongson. "Everybody must step up."

Led by JR Quiñahan, the Whoppers hope to arrest an alarming six-game slide that surprisingly followed their strong 4-0 start. *Jasmine W. Payo*

Calzaghe to present Pacquiao top award

JOE CALZAGHE, BOXING'S CURRENT longest-reigning world champion, will present the Edward J. Neil Trophy to Filipino superstar Manny Pacquiao for being chosen "Fighter of 2006" by the Boxing Writers Association of America on June 8 at the Copacabana in New York.

Calzaghe has held the super middleweight title since 1997, defending it 20 times, the last via a fifth round stoppage of Peter Manredo Jr. on April 7. Aside from the affair, Pacquiao will also watch the fight of his younger brother Bobby against Humberto Soto on June 9.

Macasieb, De Leon sink rivals in Palaui aquathlon

SOUTHEAST ASIAN GAMES BRONZE medalist Arland Macasieb and defending champion Ani de Leon posted contrasting victories in the Palaui Island Aquathlon last weekend.

Macasieb, a first timer in the event, encountered stiff opposition from Perpetual Help College instructor John Omar Paredes to win in 41 minutes and 8 seconds. Paredes clocked 42:57.

De Leon took an early lead and was never threatened in keeping her title in 49:18. Former swimming Olympian Akiko Thomson was second in 1:01.49, and Carol Gonzales, a swim instructor at the Manila Polo Club, timed 1:03.16 for third.

"It was much harder than I thought," said Macasieb of the race sponsored by the Cagayan Economic Zone Authority as part of its program to promote eco-tourism in the region.

"It is hard to get your rhythm particularly in the uphill climb."

Hounded by Paredes in the first 2.5-kilometer run leg and the 1K open water swim, Macasieb managed to pull away in the final 3K run leg that brought the competitors to the hilltop Cape Engaño Light House.

Pol Reyes finished third in 46:08 in the men's division of the event which served as the initial leg of the 2008 Speedo-National Aquathlon Series organized by the Triathlon Association of the Philippines (Trap).

"I was hoping for a repeat, but I did not assume I would, considering I lack preparation for this event," said De Leon, a member of the national triathlon coaching staff.

Other male winners in the event were Leian Cruz in the 20-29 age group in 1:22.34, Ed Ticzon (30-39) in 51:59, Australian Neil Maher (40-49) in 46:10, and Chito Noel, (50-above) in 1:51:05.

The distaff side winners were Ara Castillo (20-29) in 1:06.50, television newscaster Tricia Chiongbian (30-39) in 1:03.17, and Rolaine Padoria (40-above) in 1:20.08.

Andy Foronda and Maricel Amorada, both from the Cagayan Colleges-Tuguegarao, won the local students' race of the event that attracted 63 starters.

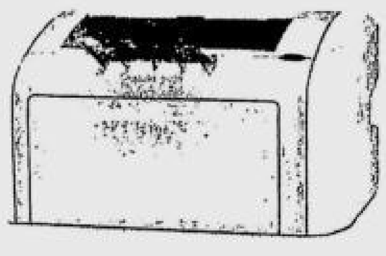
Present at the awarding ceremonies were CEZA deputy administrator Geoffrey Cabalza, Speedo's May Latorza, and Trap secretary general and race director Ramon Marchan.

"We are happy that people are getting to know about the natural attractions here in the North and we believe Palaui Island will eventually become a major tourist destination," said Cabalza. *Inquirer Sports Staff*

HP LaserJet Toner, Compaq Presario iPod Shuffle promos extended

HP LaserJet Toner promo

Due to popular demand, HP has extended its LaserJet Toner promo for the third consecutive month. For every purchase of an HP LaserJet 1020 printer from now until May 31, get a 50 percent discount on your next toner purchase.



The HP LaserJet 1020 Printer is a reasonably priced laser printer for the cost-conscious office. With an SRP of just P8,799, it delivers high-quality LaserJet printing in a compact size, and at a price that any business can afford. The LaserJet 1020 features 600x600 dpi with HP Resolution Enhancement Technology (RET), and b&w print speed of up to 15ppm (letter) and 14ppm (A4) with first page out in less than 10 seconds.

Experience for yourself how affordable it is to enjoy high-quality laser printing with the HP LaserJet 1020! Enjoy 50 percent off your next black toner by simply presenting promotion stickers from specially marked HP LaserJet 1020 Printers together with the completed discount voucher and proof of purchase to participating dealers. Redemption period is up to July 31, only.

HP Compaq Presario iPod Shuffle promo

HP has extended its iPod shuffle promo on the new HP Compaq Presario V3304TU and the HP Compaq Presario V3325TU notebook PCs. Until May 31, every purchase of either the Presario V3304TU or the Presario V3325TU entitles the buyer to a free iPod Shuffle.

The new HP Compaq Presario V3304TU Notebook PC powered by the Intel Core2 Duo Processor and the HP Compaq Presario V3325TU powered by Intel Core Duo Processor deliver impressive multitasking performance wherever you roam.

In creating these modern masterpieces, HP invented a state-of-the-art moulding technique to create the industrial brushed gunmetal casing, which offers greater scratch resistance than traditional painted casings. The unique scratch-resistant gunmetal casing helps you make the right impression.

An innovative latchless magnetic closure complements the smooth metal case. The latch-free screen is streamlined and intuitive, like every other aspect of this machine. One simple arm movement is all it takes to lift your screen into position.

One-touch buttons enrich your computing experience through improved aesthetics and usability. Control your media with the backlit capacitive buttons, which offer one-touch DVD playback. Just touch to mute or slide across the volume pad to adjust sound level.

For full multimedia enjoyment, try the optional HP xb3000 notebook expansion base. The HP xb3000 offers height-adjustable, comfortable eye level viewing, more productivity ports, wireless support and integrated speakers for this notebook.

So, whatever way you look at it, the HP Compaq Presario V3304TU and the HP Compaq Presario V3325TU are tools that are designed to impress. And if that's not enough, you get a free iPod Shuffle to go with it too. (Compaq Presario V3304TU Notebook PC: SRP P69,950; Compaq Presario V3325TU Notebook PC: SRP P59,950)

TELETECH LAUNCHES MBA PROGRAM

TeleTech Holdings Inc, a leading global business process outsourcing (BPO) provider, has launched a company-sponsored Masters Program (MBA) for TeleTech managers across the country. TeleTech vice president and general manager, Maulik Parekh, made the announcement recently with the presentation of a partnership certificate to the Ateneo De Manila Professional Business School at Rockwell Club, Makati City. TeleTech has partnered with prestigious schools for the MBA scholarship program such as the Ateneo De Manila University in Metro Manila and in Cebu, Silliman University in Dumaguete City, and University of St. La Salle in Bacolod City. TeleTech's MBA scholarship program, called 'UpGRADe,' is the first of its kind by a BPO company in the Philippines according to Parekh. TeleTech managers will be able to take MBA classes without taking a leave from work because the program has been specifically designed for BPO employees. TeleTech's scholarship program covers all the costs of an MBA master's degree such as tuition and miscellaneous fees, books and educational materials. Prospective scholars need only to follow a simple five-step process to qualify for the scholarship. This MBA program, to be rolled out in the coming school year, is also part of TeleTech's ongoing initiative to continue to be the 'employer of choice' not only in the BPO industry but in the whole country. Photo shows TeleTech executive director for human capital delivery Isabel Bales presenting the MBA upgrade partnership certificate to University of St. La Salle president Bro. Gus Boquer with TeleTech and USLS executives (from left) SOM Kit Bulfa, SOM Michael Tanner, SOM Yen Billedo, Bacolod site director Michael Sendall, USLS Graduate School dean Dr. Donna Echuas and USLS VP for finance Dr. Jocelyn Aragon

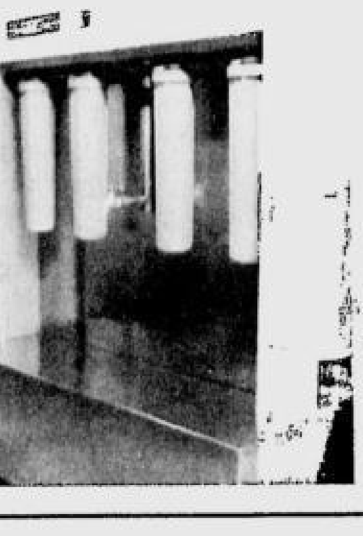
Low-cost water station for homes and businesses

FACTORIES, SCHOOLS, HOSPITALS, condos, government buildings, cooperatives, army camps, barangay halls, resorts and hotels can now produce their own high-purity drinking water for as low as 30 centavos per gallon. The Electromex UHP500 compact water station produces 5 gallons a minute, or 3,000 gallons daily, enough for high-volume commercial use.

The unit costs only P150,000 and is fully assembled complete with tanks, pumps, filters, carbon block, ultra violet germicidal lamp and the heavy-duty industrial ozone generator system that kills germs and bacteria 300 times stronger than chlorine. The UHP500 is easy to operate ("plug-and-play"), transportable with the compact size of 4 feet by 3 feet by 6 feet, perfect for small garages, kitchens, basements, small bodegas and comfort rooms.

The UHP500 doesn't need any franchise, and is better than the traditional reverse osmosis.

Electromex also builds water ozone systems for algae-free and zero-chlorine swimming pools, making overhead tanks and swimming pools germ-free and potable. Log on to www.electromexinc.com, or call 531-6782 and 535-9069.



DAVIS LANGDON & SEAH, TIP TIE-UP

TECHNOLOGICAL INSTITUTE OF THE PHILIPPINES
Center for Continuing Education
and
DAVIS LANGDON AND SEAH (Phils.), INC.
QUANTITY SURVEYING TRAIN COURSE
SIGNING OF ANDUM OF EMENT

Top international quantity surveying firm Davis Langdon & Seah (DLS) recently signed a partnership agreement with the Technological Institute of the Philippines (TIP) for the offering in May of this year of a certification program in quantity surveying (QS). Recommended for engineering graduates who want to acquire state-of-the-art knowledge in quantity surveying, the course will use modules which are abridged versions of DLS's very rigid in-house training program for the engineers that it employs. The program includes a certification test which is key to an engineer's rewarding profession in quantity surveying not only locally but also abroad, especially in the Middle East and other parts of Asia. In photo during the signing ceremony are (from left): TIP-CCE executive director Lucito 'Chito' Torres, TIP president Dr. Elizabeth Lahoz, DLS president Alan Hearn, and DLS director Henry Realon.

SPORTS

Duncan, Spurs spin Jazz out of rhythm

THE SPURS Tim Duncan (21) foils a shot by Jazz Carlos Boozer in the opener of their West Conference title series on Sunday. AP

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS—TIM DUNCAN HAD 27 points and 10 rebounds and Manu Ginobili added 23 as the San Antonio Spurs eased past the Utah Jazz, 108-100, on Sunday in game one of the Western Conference finals.

Tony Parker contributed 21 points for San Antonio, which had just one day of rest coming off its emotional six-game victory over the second-seeded Phoenix Suns.

The Spurs opened a 19-point first-half lead and held off a belated comeback by the Jazz, who had been idle since closing out Golden State in five games on Tuesday.

"You can say it was jitters. You can say they had extra days off, maybe a little bit of rust," Duncan said. "But they played better in the second half and we didn't. We played good enough, though, by the way."

The emotional letdown appeared to be a reality when the Jazz bolted to a 7-0 lead, but from then on it was all Spurs.

"We were running all over the place, giving them layups," Jazz coach Jerry Sloan said. "The layups killed us. That's what a great team does, they take advantage of mistakes, and they are as good as anybody you play against in that situation."

San Antonio shot 66 percent (21-of-32) in charging to a 54-36 halftime lead.

Duncan had 16 points and Ginobili 14 in the opening half.

Deron Williams was magnificent for the Jazz, scoring 34 points and sparking a late rally as Utah finally got the deficit under double digits in the final four minutes.

Utah hit 10 straight baskets in the fourth quarter and cut the lead to 95-87 on Williams' dunk with 2:43 to play.

Williams was unstoppable, scoring 11 points in less than four minutes and 18 overall in the quarter.

Michael Finley hit four free throws for San Antonio as the Jazz were unable to get closer than eight points until the final four minutes.

Sparked by Ginobili and Duncan, the Spurs used an 11-2 run in the second quarter to take a 44-28 lead with 3:53 left in the half. They outscored the Jazz, 32-16, in the quarter.

Every time Utah made a run in the third quarter, San Antonio had an answer.

Finley made a pair of three-pointers and Parker had a steal and uncontested basket late to give the Spurs a 78-62 cushion headed into the final 12 minutes.

The main culprit for Utah was its dreadful shooting. The Jazz shot five-of-21 for the first quarter and 12-of-41 (29 percent) in the first half.

Carlos Boozer finished with 20 points and 12 rebounds for Utah, which is facing San Antonio in the postseason for the first time since 1998—the last time the Jazz reached the NBA Finals. *AFP*

FEDERER exults after his victory. AP

Federer ends Nadal's run

HAMBURG, GERMANY—WORLD NUMBER one Roger Federer produced an astonishing turn-around to beat Rafael Nadal for the first time on clay courts in the final of the Hamburg Masters on Sunday.

The triple Grand Slam titleholder's 2-6, 6-2, 6-0 win over the French Open champion underlined his belief that he has a chance of winning in Paris in three weeks and becoming the first player since Rod Laver in 1969 to hold all four Grand Slams at the same time.

"It does feel like a breakthrough," said Federer, after inflicting the first defeat on world number two Nadal on clay in more than two years and ending the Spaniard's record-breaking 81-match winning streak on this surface. *AFP*

Orcollo cops Nevada title

REIGNING WORLD POOL LEAGUE CHAMP Dennis Orcollo blanked Shane Van Boening of the United States, 7-0, in the finals to emerge overall champion in the 2007 Enjoypool.com 9-ball Championships Saturday at the Riviera Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada.

ORCOLLO

Orcollo pocketed the top prize of $15,000 (about P700,000). Boening settled for $9,000.

Orcollo will next compete in the Predator World 10-ball championships on May 23-27 at the Bankshot Billiards Hall in Jacksonville, Florida.

En route to the title, Orcollo beat David Reljik of Australia, 11-5, Marcus Chamat of Sweden, 11-7, Neils Feijen of the Netherlands, 11-10, Francisco "Django" Bustamante, 11-7, Jose Parica, 11-8 and Boening, 11-6, who beat Davis, 7-6, in the loser's side to force a rematch with Orcollo.

Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

Lady Archers cross paths with Tigresses

GAMES TODAY (*The Arena, San Juan*)
1 p.m.—Letran vs Lyceum
3 p.m.—Far Eastern U vs Adamson
5 p.m.—Santo Tomas vs La Salle

COLLEGIATE POWERHOUSES DE La Salle University and University of Santo Tomas clash in the Shakey's V-League women's volleyball tournament at 5 p.m. today at The Arena in San Juan.

Defending champion Lady Archers, powered by Amy Guanco and Thai Sanorseang Arrerat, will shoot for their second straight victory against the reigning UAAP titlist.

The Tigresses' offense will still work around UAAP Most Valuable Player Venus Bernal, Mary Jean Balse, Ma. Angeli Tabaquero and national players Rubie de Léon and Nerissa Bautista.

Lyceum will also vie for an early 2-0 lead versus Letran at 1 p.m., while Ateneo and Far Eastern University will try to recover from their first-day setbacks at 3 p.m.

The Lady Archers, who are aiming for their fourth straight conference title, opened their campaign with a 25-16, 25-17, 25-21 triumph against the FEU Lady Tamaraws.

Guanco and Areerat combined for 24 points for the Taft-based crew, who also drew support from Manilla Santos, Jacki Alarca and Chie Saet.

The Tigresses, winner of the tournament's inaugural staging, took a leave last conference due to the graduation of their key players. But they've since rebuilt another formidable crew that includes Denise Tan, Cherry An Balse, Vida Rica Gutierrez, Melissa Cu and Michelle del Rosario.

Lyceum is favored in the opener of the three-game bill following a 28-26, 25-23, 22-25, 25-23, versus Ateneo in the conference opener.

Expected to play key roles again for the Lady Pirates are guest player Joseilyn Gorostiza and Sherrilyn Carillo, who will be ranged against Letran's sibling standouts Michelle and Mayette Carolino.

The Lady Knights will try to recover from a 26-24, 16-25, 18-25, 15-25 loss against NCAA champion and last conference's finalist San Sebastian College.

Jasmine W. Payo

JACQUELINE Alarca of La Salle (left) blocks an attempt by Beverly Semana of Far Eastern. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

SPORTSWATCH

Underbone King Sunday

TOP RIDERS TRY TO OUTCLASS ONE ANOTHer for the various titles at stake in the second leg of the 2007 San Mig Coffee Philippine Underbone King Championship this Sunday at the Batangas Racing Circuit. Johniery Enriquez, who drew the first blood in the kickoff leg last month, will be gunning for his second straight sweep in the premiere 150 cc. class of the event. He will be facing a tough 35-man field in the hunt for the Underbone King plum. Among the challengers are veteran Benjo Mendoza of Speedeffex, Iraq Bauzon, Rizaldy Canare, Benjamin Dolores and Mark Anthony Chua.

Skywalker cage clinic

THE SKYWALKER'S BASKETBALL CAMP summer clinic came to an end last Sunday at the Adidas Sports Kamp in Fort Bonifacio, Global City, Taguig. It was a six-Sunday training camp participated in by basketball enthusiasts of all ages. Samboy Lim, the camp director, said reservation for the next camp slated to start on Sept. 2 is now open. For inquiries, call 531-7554 or 0916-4987046.

Makati Invitational May 28

THE INTERNATIONAL COCKFIGHTING FEVER invades Makati Coliseum next week (May 28, 30 and June 1) via the Makati Invitational 8-Cock Super Derby. Promoters Lito Orillaza, Rudy Salud and William Co announced participants include former ambassador Danding Cojuangco, 2007 World Slasher Cup champ Gengen Arayata, Gov. Ito Ynares, Manny Pacquiao, Richard Bates, Richard Kelly of Alabama, Efren Canlas of Pampanga, the team of Chris Nesmith, Nene Abello and Willie Villarica, Fil-Ams Aster Lopez, Joe Cuyugan and Zaldy Sandoval of California.

Tecson, Lara shine in Highlands Ladies Cup

ALEX ESTABILLO AND CHONY SANtos pulled off hard-earned one-point victories to rule their respective divisions even as Jenz Tecson and Rodel Lara copped the overall gross and net titles, respectively, in the second Highlands Ladies Cup at the Midlands Golf Course in Tagaytay over the weekend.

Estabillo, an 11-handicapper, scored 41 points under the Stableford scoring system from a gross 78 to nip Daki Fonacier (40-79) by one point for top honors in Class A.

Santos, on the other hand, turned in 37 points and edged Nelda Roquel by one point to claim the Class A plum in the ladies division of the event backed by Platinum sponsors San Miguel Corp. and socio-civic leader and golfer Rosalind Wee.

With a 16 handicap, Santos carded a gross 87 while Roquel, an 11-handicapper, posted a gross 83 for 36 points.

Tecson, a 5 handicapper, topped the 146-player field that included 113 participants and 33 sponsors as he fired a one-under par 71 to claim the overall championship in the event held to raise funds for the various projects of the Sisters of Mary, Boys and Girls Town in Silang, Cavite.

Carding a 78, the 15-handicapper Lara won low net honors with 45 points.

Rowena Royena, with a 29 handicap, made 45 points from a gross 90 to beat Mai Cu (23) and bag the crown in ladies' Class B. Cu shot a 92 worth 39 points for second.

Vivian Mawis, a 32 handicapper, topped Class C with 40 points from a gross 100. Second two points behind was Tahnee Dichaves (handicap 29), who also carded a gross 100.

Jojo Guiao nipped Tommy Tan in the countback in a tight battle for top honors in men's Class B. Both wound up with gross 80s and finished with identical 42 points.

Edgar Chua took the Class C plum with 45 points from a gross 94 for a four-point win over Raymond Gabriel, who shot a 90 worth 41 points.

Earlier, Philippine Airlines' Jaime Bautista, Edgar Chua of Pilipinas Shell, Sandy Prieto-Romualdez, chair of Tagaytay Highlands Ladies Chapter, and Rosalind Wee, president, Tagaytay Highlands Ladies Chapter, hit the ceremonial drive to kick off the 18-hole tournament organized by the Highlands Ladies Chapter, headed by Dionne Cu, and backed by Philippine Airlines, Belle Resources and Samsung (gold), and Highlands Prime Inc., Bingo Bonanza, Shell Corp., Smart, Comworks, Pagcor, PCSO, Royal Caribbean International and Pacsports (silver).

The event's other major sponsors: Welchade, Regent Travel, Bank of Commerce, Dole, Nestlé, W Tower, Rosalie Heo, Mejore, Dunkin Donuts, El Nido Resort, Guess, Marie France, Seattle's Best, Monmilk, Pisanti/Fila, Wilson Sports, Wow Magic Sing, Dynamic Sports, Amex, Chocolate Kiss, Celerity, Universal Robina Corp., Dickies, Odyssey Music & Video, Fiesta Tropicale and Red Ribbon.

JONATHAN Tiu of Team Ere gears up for his final showdown with Vanni Garcia of W. Autosport Vannitec.

Tiu rips drag racing mark

ROSARIO, BATANGAS—JONATHAN TIU OF Team Ere saved his best for last en route to a record-breaking ride and a second Quick 8 crown in the 2007 San Mig Coffee Drag Racing Championship.

Tiu drove his reliable Mitsubishi Evo 5 to a very fast 10.287 seconds in the final showdown against Vanni Garcia of W. Autosport Vannitec to slash 0.3 seconds off his own record of 10.57 and seal a new Philippine record in any drag racing event.

Tiu eclipsed the old record of 10.38 seconds previously held by Cebuano champion David Lim aboard his DGL Motorsports Honda Chop Top.

Conditions were perfect right from the start as Tiu quickly broke the record for the first time when he clocked his personal best time of 10.4 during the qualifying race.

Then Tiu worked his way up, beating Blanche Racing's Jason Ong, Ryan Lee of Speedworks in the semifinals and Garcia in the final showdown for the record feat that was validated by BRC Drag Racing Director Fil Gulfin.

With the win, Tiu further firm up his grip of solo leadership in the race for the coveted Drag Racing Driver of the Year award with 40 points.

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Peso strengthens further to 46.31:$1

Gov't fails to sell bank stake

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT has failed yet again to sell its 90-percent stake in Al-Amanah Islamic Investment Bank of the Philippines.

The Privatization Management Office (PMO) declared a failed bidding yesterday after only one company—Banco de Oro—submitted a bid for the government's stake in the Islamic bank.

It was the fourth failed bidding for Al-Amanah bank, which the government has been trying to privatize for years as part of its plan to sell nonperforming assets.

Yesterday's failed bidding came on the heels of the failed bidding for the old Iloilo airport, which the government had also hoped to sell within the year.

The government has set a floor price of P900 million for its stake in Al-Amanah.

An official from the Department of Finance involved in privatization matters said the government had yet to decide on what to do following the failed bidding.

He said privatization authorities had to agree on whether to conduct another bidding or enter into a negotiated bid with the sole bidder to push through with the privatization.

Government entities with a combined 90-percent stake in the bank include the Development Bank of the Philippines, Government Service Insurance System, Social Security System and the Privatization Management Office.

The government has preferred to sell the shares as a bloc, in the belief this would attract more investors.

The government started serving the banking needs of the country's Muslims when it established the Philippine Amanah Bank via Presidential Decree

GOV'T/ B3

INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in our nation's life

Top vehicles sold (First Quarter 2007)

Innova: 2,350 units
(P763,000 - 1,144,000)
Vios: 2,000
(P553,000 - 742,000)
Avanza: 1,806
(P582,000 - 773,000)
Civic: 1,703
(P777,000 - 1,132,000)
Fortuner: 1,700
(P1,353,000 - 1,663,000)

Source: Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines, Inc. Toyota Philippines, Honda Philippines
Kate Pedroso Inquirer Research

IN THIS ISSUE

DA draws up plans to raise agri production by 6 percent /B4

Chinese firm plans to build cargo hub in RP /B6

'Stocks are strong, so are remittance flows'

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO YESTERDAY RALLIED TO 46.31:$1, its strongest in six-and-a-half years, rising with other Asian currencies after China widened the yuan's trading band against the dollar and lifted interest rates.

Shrugging off a report from major credit rating agency Standard & Poor's, the peso gained by another 29 centavos from Friday's finish of 46.60 to close at its intra-day high yesterday.

Last Friday, Standard & Poor's maintained the country's sovereign credit rating at a few notches below investment grade, citing lingering concerns over the country's fiscal stability.

Yesterday's closing rate of 46.31 was the highest since the peso touched 46.30 on Oct. 6, 2000.

Trading volume at the spot foreign exchange market Philippine Dealing System was brisk at $971.85 million, as the country was reported to be attracting some "yen carry trade" portfolio inflows on top of strong seasonal remittances from overseas Filipino workers, said Jonathan Ravelas, Banco de Oro Universal Bank's chief strategist.

"Yen carry trade" refers to the practice of borrowing cheap money from Japan, where interest rates are very low, and investing the proceeds in higher-yielding emerging markets like the Philippines.

The disappointing report from S&P as yet has not affected the forex trade, Ravelas said.

According to one trader, "there are lots of flows from foreign funds coming into the market... Stocks are strong, and so are remittance flows."

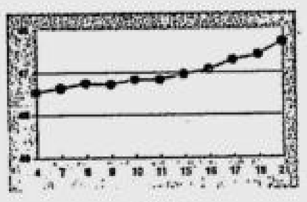
Also, investors are waiting for the May fiscal report, Ravelas said.

After a disappointing first

PESO/ B3

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES


MAY

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 46.31 = $1
As of 5 p.m., May 21, 2007

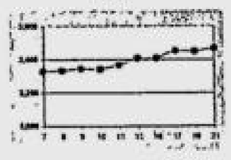
¥ 121.28 = $1
As of 5 p.m., May 21, 2007

GOLD: $659.60-660.10
per ounce Hong Kong, May 18, 2007

STOCK MARKET

Shares close 0.50% higher

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX
MAY



SHARE PRICES yesterday closed 0.50 percent higher, buoyed by a surge in Wall Street last week and strong interest in blue chip Manila Electric Co., dealers said.

Sustained buying, particularly in Meralco, saw the main index touching a new intraday high of 3,480.70 before mild profit-taking limited the gains at the close, they said.

The 30-company composite index finished up 17.16 points

SHARES/ B3

(See stock market report on Page B2)

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HONDA OFFERS & TREATS
CITY Get Cash Incentives worth P15,000
Jazz Get an i-Pod Nano
CIVIC Get FREE LTO Registration for 3 years FOR 2.0 variant only

Model / Variant	SRP	LOW DOWNPAYMENT PLANS 15% DP	Monthly Amortization (60 mos.)	LOW MONTHLY INSTALLMENT PLANS 50% DP	Monthly Amortization (60 mos.)
CITY 1.3 A MT	P572,000	P85,800	P10,820	P286,000	P6,226
JAZZ 1.3 S MT	P650,000	P97,500	P12,679	P325,000	P7,459
CIVIC 1.8V MT	P777,000	P116,550	P15,157	P388,500	P8,916
ACCORD 2.4VTi-L AT	P1,470,000	P220,500	P28,674	P735,000	P16,868
2007 CR-V 2.0 2WD MT	P1,190,000	P178,500	P23,213	P595,000	P13,655

*All plans are subject to bank approval (BPI Family Savings Bank and RCBC Savings Bank)

Promo runs from May 10 - 31, 2007
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2128 Series of 2007

Visit any authorized dealers for details:

Metro Manila

Honda Cars Alabang	Tel No: (02) 807 7889, Fax No: 809 5052
Honda Cars Kalookan, Inc.	Tel No (02) 366 5701, Fax No 361 6445
Honda Cars Makati, Inc	Tel No (02) 852 4181, Fax No 852 1158
Honda Cars Pasig	Tel No (02) 634 2730 Fax No 637 2937
Honda Cars Quezon City, Inc.	Tel Nos. (02) 712 6850 to 61, Fax No 732 8599
Honda Cars Shaw	Tel No (02) 717 1681, Fax No 725 7673
Honda Cars Manila	Tel No (02) 562 4548, Fax No 564 7338
Honda Cars Fairview	Tel Nos (02) 9352655, 9352617, Fax No 9357664
Honda Cars Marikina	Tel Nos (02) 9426202, 9980512, Fax No 9423561

Provincial

Honda Cars Pangasinan, Inc.	Tel Nos: (075) 5221488 to 89 Fax No: (075) 5173739
Honda Cars Laguna, Inc.	Tel Nos (049) 5627713 to 14, Fax No (049) 5627712
Honda Cars Pampanga, Inc	Tel No (045) 9635118, Fax No (045) 9635554
Honda Cars Cebu Inc.	Tel No (032) 2313502, Fax No (032) 2314488
Honda Cars Negros Occidental	Tel No (034) 7076000, Fax No (034) 4411276
Honda Cars Davao, Inc	Tel Nos. (082) 2217408, 2222171, Fax No. (082) 2217407
Honda Cars Mandaue	Tel No (032) 4223700, Fax No: (032) 4223600
Honda Cars Cagayan De Oro	Tel Nos. (088) 8584010 to 18, Fax No (088) 8584015
Honda Cars Tarlac, Inc	Tel Nos (045) 9828002 to 05, Fax No (045) 9828007
Honda Cars Isabela, Inc	Tel No (078) 6521245, Fax No (078) 6521248
Honda Cars Gen. Santos, Inc	Tel Nos (083) 5539796 to 97, Fax No (083) 3013109
Honda Cars Iloilo	Tel Nos. (033) 508-8400, 508-8522, Fax No (033) 329-7763

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EIB SAVINGS BANK, INC.

Cebu South Road, Barangay Bulacao, Talisay Cebu City

STATEMENT OF CONDITION
(Head Office and Branches)
As of March 30, 2007

ASSETS		AMOUNT
Cash and Cash Items	P	759,005
Due from Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas		1,578,492
Due from Other Banks		33,026,336
Held to Maturity Financial Investments (Net)		27,864,640
Receivables from Customers (Net)		5,349,904
Bank Premises, Furnitures, Fixtures, & Equipments (Net)		1,260,801
Other Assets (Net):		
Others		455,235
TOTAL ASSETS	P	70,294,413
LIABILITIES		
Savings Deposits		1,315,062
Time Deposits		1,160,001
Unearned Income and Other Deferred Credits		275,330
Other Liabilities		1,305,394
TOTAL LIABILITIES	P	4,055,787
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		
Capital Stock	P	50,000,000
Surplus		16,839,543
Undivided Profits		(600,917)
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	66,238,626
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	70,294,413

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jaime C. Gonzalez
Chairman/Director

Alfredo M. Yao
Director

PRINCIPAL OFFICER

Gerardo V. Munda
President

Melvin B. Cañedo
Treasurer

Other Information:

1. Deposits of:		
a. Banks		2,762,066
2. Compliance with Magna Carta Law:		
Prescribed		
Ratio of Compliance	6% for Small Enterprises	2% for Medium Ent.
Actual Compliance	7.83%	2.84%
3. Amount of non-performing loans		543,721
4. Ratio of non-performing loans to total loan portfolio		4.24%
5. General provision for loan losses		51,653
6. Specific provision for loan losses		7,427,491
7. Return on equity (ROE)		-0.91%

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
MAKATI CITY) S.S.

I / WE, Melvin B. Cañedo and Gerardo V. Munda of the above-mentioned bank do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above statement of condition are true and correct to the best of our knowledge and belief.

(Sgd.) MELVIN B. CAÑEDO
Treasurer

(Sgd.) GERARDO V. MUNDA
President

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this 10th day of May, 2007, affiant exhibiting to me his/her/their Community Tax No.00703747 issued at Cebu on January 04, 2007 and Community Tax No.01578315 issued at Manila on January 05, 2007.

Doc. No. 158
Page No. 32
Book No. V
Series of 2007

(Sgd.) Emmanuel L. Silva
Notary Public
Until December 31, 2007
PTR No. 1311453; 1.11.07 - Makati City
IBP Lifetime No. 03754; Quezon City
IBP Roll of Attorney No. 40786

MEMBER OF THE PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION (PDIC) Maximum insurance for each depositor P250,000

MEPI
MARKETING EXECUTIVES OF THE PHARMACEUTICAL-HEALTHCARE INDUSTRY
presents

Pharmaceutical Generics Business Forum

8:00 AM, 22 May 2007
Dusit Hotel Nikko, Makati City

Carlos C. Ejercito
President and Chief Executive Officer
United Laboratories, Inc.
SPEAKER

Alex D. Padilla
Undersecretary for External Affairs & Regulations, Department of Health

Teddie Elson E. Rivera
Executive Vice President, Philippine International Trading Corporation

Ma. Erlinda B. Pascual
President, Drugstores Association of the Philippines (DSAP)

Allan Marx B. Ancheta
ASEAN Business Leader for Learning Solutions & Change Management, IMS Health

REACTORS

co-presented by
PITC PHARMA

PhilWeb income surges 151%

By Riza T. Olchondra

INTERNET GAMING-turned-IT service firm PhilWeb Corp. reported a 151-percent surge in profit and a 74-percent growth in sales in the first quarter this year.

Unaudited figures reported to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday showed that the company's unaudited net income in the first quarter of 2007 hit P40 million from P15.9 million recorded in the same period last year.

PhilWeb said the largest income contributions came from Internet gaming, interest income from short-term placements and equity on net earnings from investors.

Meanwhile, the company generated P26.1 million more revenues in the first quarter, up to P61.3 million from P35.1 million last year.

The company attributed the revenue surge to increased transactions from its Internet sports betting and Internet casino business.

Costs soared as well due to the increase in rentals and other overhead and additional manpower needed for the development of new gaming projects, the company said.

PhilWeb put down cost and expenses of P19.8 million as of March, up from P18.7 million recorded in the same period last year.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of May 21, 2007)

52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
17.5	5	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc.	12.5	12.5	12	12.5	127,600
73	42.5	Bank of the Philippine Islands	68.5	68.5	68	68.5	1,488,900
67	30.5	Banco de Oro Universal Bank	65	67	65	66.5	1,165,500
935	630	China Banking Corp.	910	920	910	910	2,480
20	18.18	Citystate Savings Bank	19.75	19.75	19.75	19.75	300
119	60	Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	114	117	114	117	234,530
0.63	0.36	Export and Industry Bank Inc.	0.53	0.54	0.53	0.54	1,920,000
68.5	29	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Company	64.5	65	64	65	4,538,300
55	30.5	Philippine National Bank	47	49	47	48	138,500
68	38.5	Philippine Savings Bank	62	64	62	64	10,300
72	40	Philippine Bank of Communications	52	52	52	52	100
39.57	13.04	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	30	30	29.5	30	2,704,700
90	41	Security Bank Corp.	84	84	83	83.5	302,200
65.77	40.55	Union Bank of the Philippines	62	63	62	63	1,029,200
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTION					
0.85	0.6	Bankard Inc.	0.67	0.67	0.66	0.66	1,000,000
7.7	1.5	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	6.7	6.8	6.6	6.8	203,000
6.5	3.5	Filipino Fund Inc.	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	10,000
0.8	0.4	First Abacus Financial Holdings Corp.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	800,000
2,000.00	1,500.00	Manulife Financial Corp.	1,640.00	1,640.00	1,640.00	1,640.00	40
5	4.15	National Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	4.3	4.4	4.25	4.25	14,958,000
2.4	0.97	PCI Leasing and Finance Inc.	2.36	2.38	2.36	2.38	78,000
1,005.00	200	The Philippine Stock Exchange Inc.	600	610	600	610	2,040
1.94	1.02	iVantage Corp.	1.72	1.8	1.7	1.74	1,341,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
62.5	41	First Gen Corp.	59.5	60	59.5	60	397,100
82.5	40.5	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	79	82	79	81.5	2,413,100
12.75	6.6	Manila Water Company Inc.	12.25	12.25	11.75	12	5,120,700
90.5	13	Manila Electric Company A	88	90.5	88	89	754,300
91	20.25	Manila Electric Company B	88	91	88	89.5	4,035,200
6.8	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	5.8	6	5.8	6	8,114,000
5.7	3.35	Petron Corp.	5.1	5.4	5.1	5.2	7,025,000
1.62	0.89	Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Dev't Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.46	1.48	771,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
5.9	2.85	Alaska Milk Corp.	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.6	30,000
2.95	1.88	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	2.2	2.24	2.18	2.18	2,061,000
3	1.24	CADP Group Corp.	1.84	1.84	1.84	1.84	1,000
28.5	19.5	Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	8,000
61	30	Jollibee Foods Corp.	53.5	54	53.5	54	559,400
1.62	0.69	RFM Corp.	1.4	1.42	1.4	1.4	1,459,000
4.05	2.34	Roxas Holdings	2.38	2.38	2.38	2.38	62,000
80	61	San Miguel Corp. A	75.5	75.5	71.5	71.5	239,000
88	68	San Miguel Corp. B	80	80	78	78	146,000
22	15.5	Universal Robina Corp.	16	16	15.5	15.75	6,252,600
		CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
5.4	1.07	EEI Corp.	5.3	5.4	5.1	5.4	13,978,000
9.2	4.2	Holcim Philippines Inc.	9.1	9.1	8.8	8.8	225,000
7	1.1	Republic Cement Corp.	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.6	41,000
2	0.245	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc.	1.82	1.84	1.78	1.84	2,763,000
		CHEMICALS					
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
		HOLDING FIRMS					
4.05	1.7	A. Soriano Corp.	3.75	3.8	3.75	3.75	[illegible]
0.0925	0.022	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.0675	0.07	0.0675	0.0675	5,500,000
0.97	0.17	APC Group Inc.	0.93	0.94	0.89	0.89	86,540,000
0.018	0.006	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. A	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	310,200,000
0.019	0.0065	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. B	0.012	0.013	0.012	0.012	242,100,000
9.7	4.85	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	9	9.1	9	9	2,424,000
0.016	0.0065	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.014	0.015	0.014	0.015	1,589,900,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	6.8	6.8	6.5	6.6	11,887,000
1.04	0.45	Alsons Consolidated Resources Inc.	0.83	0.83	0.8	0.82	380,000
2.26	0.83	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2.14	2.16	2.1	2.12	6,188,000
566.67	272.92	Ayala Corp.	525	530	515	520	242,230
14	7.92	Bacnotan Consolidated Industries Inc.	13.5	13.75	13.5	13.75	155,400
6.9	0.7	Balabac Resources and Holdings Co. Inc.	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.6	510,000
4.45	0.97	Benpres Holdings Corp.	4.05	4.25	4.05	4.15	46,256,000
9.1	3.25	DMCI Holdings Inc.	8.8	9.1	8.8	9	3,718,000
6	2.65	Filinvest Development Corp.	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	666,000
3.55	1.14	House of Investments Inc.	2.95	2.95	2.95	2.95	63,000
14.5	5.3	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	12	12	11.75	11.75	482,200
0.43	0.185	MEDCO Holdings Inc.	0.36	0.38	0.36	0.37	1,000,000
0.88	0.1	Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	620,000
13.25	0.88	Magnum Holdings Inc.	11.5	12.25	11.25	12	2,045,800
4.55	0.19	Multitech Investments Corp.	4.15	4.25	4.1	4.15	1,765,000
5.4	1.2	PAL Holdings Inc.	3.7	3.8	3.65	3.7	687,000
0.54	0.155	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.48	0.54	0.48	0.53	29,650,000
1.8	1.2	Republic Glass Holdings Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	32,000
427.5	205	SM Investments Corp.	425	427.5	425	427.5	216,920
2.2	0.6	Seafront Resources Corp.	1.72	1.74	1.72	1.74	140,000
0.67	0.115	Sinophil Corp.	0.63	0.67	0.62	0.62	233,920,000
1.38	0.68	South China Resources Inc.	1.36	1.36	1.34	1.34	421,000
0.24	0.08	Wellex Industries Inc.	0.16	0.17	0.15	0.16	49,630,000
0.55	0.155	Zeus Holdings Inc.	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	150,000
		PROPERTY					
2.16	0.75	A Brown Company Inc.	1.82	1.84	1.78	1.8	3,868,000
0.58	0.3	Araneta Properties Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	60,000
15.75	8.54	Ayala Land Inc.	15.5	15.75	15.5	15.5	10,439,800
1.72	0.95	Belle Corp.	1.5	1.64	1.5	1.62	79,313,000
3.5	1.18	C and P Homes Inc.	3.3	3.5	3.3	3.5	3,170,000
4.7	1.8	Cebu Holdings Inc.	4.4	4.7	4.4	4.7	991,000
0.54	0.24	Crown Equities Inc.	0.5	0.54	0.5	0.54	19,690,000
0.58	0.165	Cyber Bay Corp.	0.53	0.58	0.53	0.56	24,340,000
0.31	0.14	EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	30,000
3.1	0.64	Edsa Properties Holdings Inc.	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.6	33,000
0.99	0.44	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.78	0.79	0.77	0.78	12,540,000
0.27	0.027	Ever Gotesco Res and Hold'gs Inc.	0.2	0.27	0.2	0.245	125,390,000
1.12	0.38	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.8	0.81	0.8	0.8	4,210,000
2.04	0.93	Filinvest Land Inc.	1.88	1.94	1.88	1.92	69,221,000
3.35	2.04	Highlands Prime Inc.	2.44	2.44	2.44	2.44	18,000
0.016	0.0038	Interport Resources Corp. A	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.011	13,000,000
0.69	0.2	Kuok Phil. Properties Inc.	0.42	0.42	0.41	0.41	7,670,000
0.99	0.18	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	0.72	0.76	0.72	0.73	440,000
4.15	1.26	Megaworld Corp.	3.95	4.15	3.95	4.1	44,886,000
6.4	1.5	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	4.6	4.6	4.55	4.55	87,000
0.26	0.1	Phil. Estates Corp.	0.185	0.19	0.185	0.19	1,420,000
0.87	0.25	Philippine Realty and Holdings Corp.	0.62	0.63	0.61	0.61	6,420,000
3.8	1.1	Polar Property Holdings Corp.	3.3	3.8	3.3	3.8	363,000
23	9.6	Robinson Land Corp.	19.25	19.25	19	19.25	10,629,900
5.2	1.23	SM Development Corp.	5.1	5.2	5	5.1	10,530,000
13	6.9	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	12	12.25	11.75	12	6,887,400
0.96	0.51	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	710,000
0.27	0.06	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.22	0.245	0.215	0.235	68,780,000
1.74	0.3	Zipporah Realty Holdings Inc.	1.36	1.38	1.34	1.34	1,510,000
		MEDIA					
32	13.5	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	31.5	31.5	31.5	31.5	134,800
1.14	0.97	Manila Bulletin Publishing Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	53,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.1	Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.52	1.54	20,619,000
1,445.00	820	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,345.00	1,360.00	1,345.00	1,355.00	83,660
2,820.00	1,700.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	2,540.00	2,545.00	2,535.00	2,540.00	90,060
7.9	3.1	Pilipino Telephone Corp.	6.7	6.7	6.6	6.6	2,669,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.39	0.155	Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.245	0.25	0.245	0.25	[illegible]
9	2	Diversified Financial Network Inc.	8.5	8.7	8.2	8.6	932,000
7.6	2	IPVG Corp.	7	7.2	7	7	1,255,000
0.075	0.046	ISM Communications Corp.	0.065	0.065	0.0625	0.0625	3,700,000
0.033	0.011	Imperial Resources Inc. A	0.028	0.028	0.028	0.028	1,000,000
2.9	1.78	Ionics Inc.	2.18	2.18	2.18	2.18	182,000
0.0675	0.038	Island Information and Technology Inc.	0.0575	0.0575	0.0575	0.0575	1,200,000
1.84	1.12	Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.44	1.44	1.42	1.44	368,000
0.06	0.027	PhilWeb Com Inc.	0.049	0.05	0.049	0.05	161,300,000
5.8	1	Transpacific Broadband Group Int'l. Inc.	2.14	2.16	2.12	2.12	136,000
1.88	1.14	Aboitiz Transport System Corp.	1.66	1.68	1.66	1.68	300,000
6.8	2.5	Asian Terminals Inc.	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	331,000
32	12.5	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	28	28.5	28	28.5	1,005,400
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
4.25	1.26	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	3.85	3.9	3.85	3.85	2,076,000
5	2.7	Manila Jockey Club Inc.	5	5	5	5	26,000
0.63	0.18	Premiere Entertainment Productions Inc.	0.52	0.63	0.51	0.62	26,890,000
1.2	0.47	Waterfront Philippines Inc.	0.99	0.99	0.95	0.97	890,000
		EDUCATION					
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
4.5	1.84	Macroasia Corp.	4.3	4.5	4.25	4.4	[illegible]
16.25	13	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	15.75	16.25	15.75	16	2,173,000
30	9.5	Paxys Inc.	27	27.5	26.5	27.5	802,400
65	22	Prime Gaming Philippines Inc.	65	65	65	65	700
		MINING					
0.018	0.007	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp.	0.012	0.013	0.012	0.013	99,000,000
7.6	2.6	Apex Mining Company Inc. A	6.4	6.5	6.4	6.5	1,971,000
7.7	2.55	Apex Mining Company Inc. B	6.8	7	6.6	7	540,000
21.25	5.6	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	20.5	21.25	20.25	21	5,737,900
14.25	8.7	Benguet Corp. A	12	12.5	12	12.5	30,400
4	1.62	Dizon Copper Silver Mines Inc.	2.6	3	2.6	3	52,000
2.24	0.0602	GEOGRACE Resources Philippines Inc.	2.22	2.24	2.18	2.2	22,572,000
0.36	0.215	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. A	0.3	0.3	0.29	0.29	53,660,000
0.42	0.225	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. B	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	7,200,000
0.037	0.0154	Manila Mining Corp. A	0.036	0.037	0.036	0.037	456,500,000
0.041	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. B	0.04	0.041	0.04	0.04	231,700,000
0.024	0.0075	Omico Corp.	0.02	0.02	0.019	0.02	179,100,000
5.6	2.65	Philex Mining Corp.	5.3	5.6	5.2	5.6	37,296,000
30	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	12,000
0.87	0.25	United Paragon Mining Corp.	0.74	0.78	0.74	0.78	1,630,000
1.8	0.41	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp.	1.42	1.46	1.42	1.46	[illegible]
		OIL					
0.58	0.23	Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.43	0.43	0.42	0.42	[illegible]
0.019	0.008	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. A	0.018	0.019	0.017	0.019	547,400,000
0.02	0.009	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. B	0.019	0.02	0.019	0.02	202,200,000
14.02	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	10.25	10.75	10.25	10.5	195,600
0.019	0.0089	The Philodrill Corp.	0.018	0.019	0.018	0.018	1,004,300,000

BY INQUIRER RESEARCH

SOURCE: TECHNISTOCK

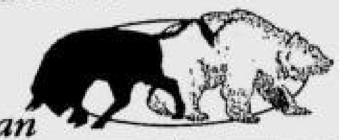
CURRENCIES

May 21, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.740028	1.000000	46.6710
Japan	Yen	0.006114	0.008262	0.3856
United Kingdom	Pound	1.461482	1.974900	92.1706
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.094646	0.127895	5.9690
Switzerland	Franc	0.603169	0.815062	38.0398
Canada	Dollar	0.678676	0.917095	42.8017
Singapore	Dollar	0.485010	0.655394	30.5879
Australia	Dollar	0.610433	0.824878	38.4979
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.962991	2.652590	123.7990
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.197330	0.266652	12.4449
Brunei	Dollar	0.483426	0.653253	30.4880
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000084	0.000113	0.0053
Thailand	Baht	0.022631	0.030581	1.4272
UAE	Dirham	0.201555	0.272361	12.7114
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.351300	63.0665
Korea	Won	0.000793	0.001071	0.0500
China	Yuan**	0.096501	0.130402	6.0860
Argentina	Peso	0.240659	0.325203	15.1775
Brazil	Real	0.377219	0.509736	23.7899
Denmark	Kroner	0.134212	0.181360	8.4643
India	Rupee	0.018336	0.024777	1.1564
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.217656	0.294118	13.7268
Mexico	New Peso	0.068524	0.092597	4.3216
New Zealand	Dollar	0.541035	0.731101	34.1212
Norway	Kroner	0.122505	0.165541	7.7260
Pakistan	Rupee	0.012170	0.016445	0.7675
South Africa	Rand	0.105303	0.142296	6.6411
Sweden	Kroner	0.108475	0.146582	6.8411
Syria	Pound	0.014256	0.019264	0.8991
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.022173	0.029962	1.3984
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000345	0.000466	0.0217

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—May 18, 2007
* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen.
** Asian time closing rate as of May 18, 2007

Phisix makes an all-time high

MR. BEARBULL



Ron Nathan

MY DOCTOR FRIENDS ARE COMING TO MY house on Friday to inoculate me against Hepatitis Q. Admittedly, it hasn't been discovered yet but better safe than sorry. They sent me a load of medical notes supposedly written by doctors in an American hospital:

The patient gets chest pain if she lies on her left side for over a year. On the second day, the knee was better and on the third day, it had disappeared completely.

She has no rigors or shaking chills but her husband states that she was very hot in bed last night.

Discharge status: Alive but without permission.

The patient refused an autopsy.

The patient has no past history of suicides.

Patient left his white cells at another hospital.

The patient experienced sudden shortness of breath while having sex, which gradually deteriorated in the emergency room.

The patient has neck veins distended down to the ankles.

My daughter's school has closed down and everything was sold very cheaply. My wife bought a Yamaha and spent the weekend playing with her organ. I named my daughter Charity because, when she was conceived, I was 68 and my wife was 39. We had already lost faith and hope.

* * *

On May 18, 2007, the Phisix finally broke by less than two points the Jan. 9, 1997 high of 3,447. However, this is not a fair comparison because every year or two, the PSE removes the three worst performing stocks and replaces them with better or larger stocks. Consequently, the indices are different and the latter has been constantly upgraded. Over this 10-year period, inflation has been 70.2 percent so that, in real terms, the true value of the Phisix is only 29.8 percent of what it was a decade ago. So much for the myth of long-term investment.

When Warren Buffett and I were young, the United States and the United Kingdom tended to have four-year cycles, which mysteriously coincided with elections held every four years. Markets would rise about six months before elections while the incumbent government promised the earth and tax cuts. A year later, disillusioned investors got wise and markets fell. The only major interruption was when the Arabs suddenly increased the price of oil from $4 a barrel to about $30 and inflation spiraled throughout the world.

All this has been changed by the introduction of the Internet and the proliferation of computers. Information is now transmitted instantly so the cycles have become much shorter. No longer can you be a long-term player, you have to be a momentum player. This means using technical analysis or charts. Knowing when to buy is more important than knowing what to buy.

Let us take two examples. At the height of the bull market, Benpres was P20 and had you bought it then, you would be losing 80 percent of your capital, ignoring inflation. However, if you had bought it at 8 centavos, you would, have increased your capital 50 times. Take a blue chip such as Meralco. At its peak, it was P157 and you would still be down nearly 50 percent; if you bought it at P9 you could have multiplied your investment nine times.

Without some knowledge of timing, most investors lose money especially as the top of any bull market is characterized by euphoria and huge volume. When I first became a technical analyst in 1970, it was classified on a par with voodoo; now it is highly respected and half the analysts on Bloomberg are technicians. Riding the momentum is the only game in town.

The other important criterion is to pick the rights sectors. In 2002, it was mobile phones and I recommended TEL at P226 for a five-year run. It is now 10 times higher and virtually ex-growth. In 2004, it was Petron at P1.80 on a yield of 11 percent and it subsequently .went to P5. The following year, I picked Paxys as the "hottest stock I town," as I was convinced that the call center industry was set to expand for at least five years. Allowing for the rights issue, the IPO price was P2.80. It is now P27 and has just announced that first quarter profits are up 80 percent on a year ago, partly due to an acquisition. Another 10-bagger.

In 2006, I chose Philex at P1.20, P1.40 and, finally, at P1.64. Metal prices surged and the shares rose will above P5. After that came Apex, which jumped from P1.80 to P6.80 before getting itself suspended for not submitting quarterly reports. This year, I said that 2007/2008 will be the years of the mining industry and I recommended GEO at 60 centavos. It has since quadrupled, allowing for the rights issue at P1, and it has much further to go. The rights are saleable on Friday providing they are fully paid.

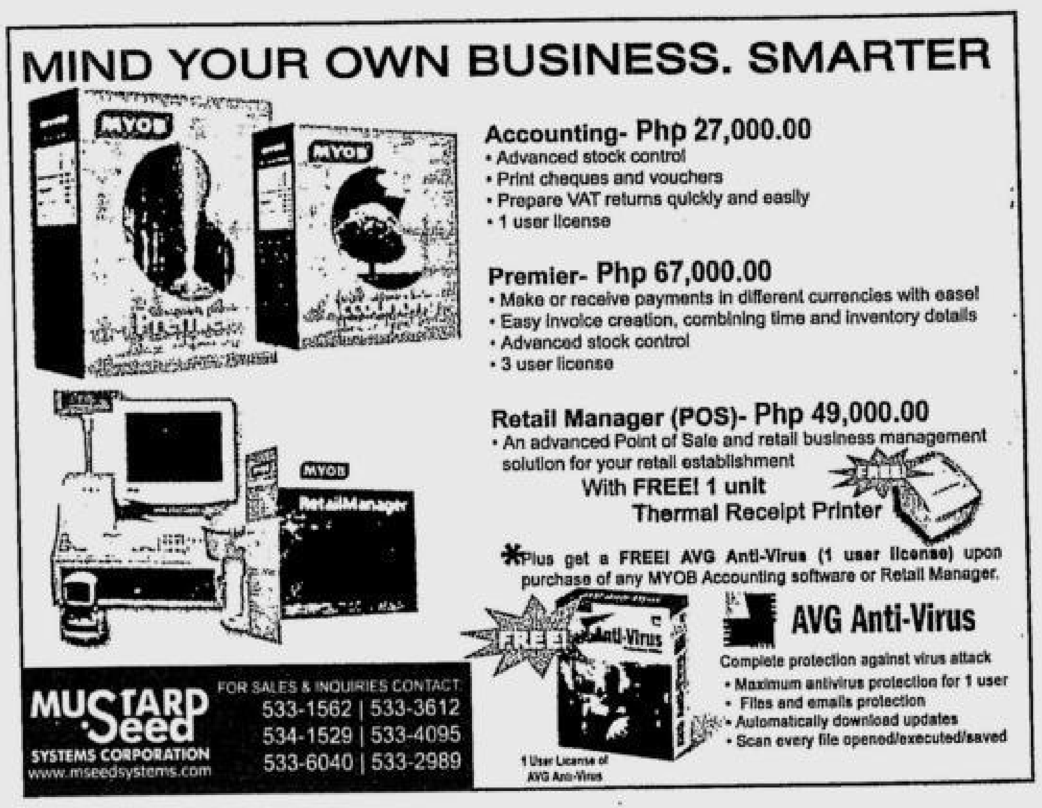
My last recommendation was Atlas, as soon as it broke P10. Not only was this an important resistance level but also its par value. Once it could hold this level, foreign brokers were willing to lend it $100 million to rehabilitate the company's copper mine in Cebu. In a few weeks, it has doubled and we hear that the dollar loan has been approved by the Monetary Board and is about to be signed.

Atlas is already producing nickel and by the end of the year, Carmen Copper, once the third largest copper mine in the world, will again be producing copper and gold. I have calculated the potential earnings per share for 2008 and if my figure is anywhere near correct, the share price will be much higher next year. Of course, there are risks because nobody can forecast metal prices a year ahead. But with the Olympics in Beijing next year and a huge exposition in Shanghai in 2010, which is expected to attract 100 million visitors, I do not see China slowing below 10 percent in the next three years.

Other profitable sectors are property, power, infrastructure and tourism but prices of stocks are already high and they do not possess the same sustainable growth potential as mining, which is capable of leading the country back into an era of prosperity last seen in the years leading up to 1980. Then, mining accounted for 23 percent of the GDP; today it accounts for only one percent.

Two weeks ago, there was a big conference in Singapore in which 30 companies were invited to tell their success stories. The three companies chosen to represent the Philippines were COAT, SECB and GEO. The President opened a two-day mining conference last week and Finance Secretary Margarito Teves, Bangko Sentral Governor Amando Tetangco and Natural Resources Secretary Angelo Reyes were all there. Watch out for the 7th Asia Pacific Mining Conference and Exhibition on June 5 to June 7.

mrbearbull@hotmail.com



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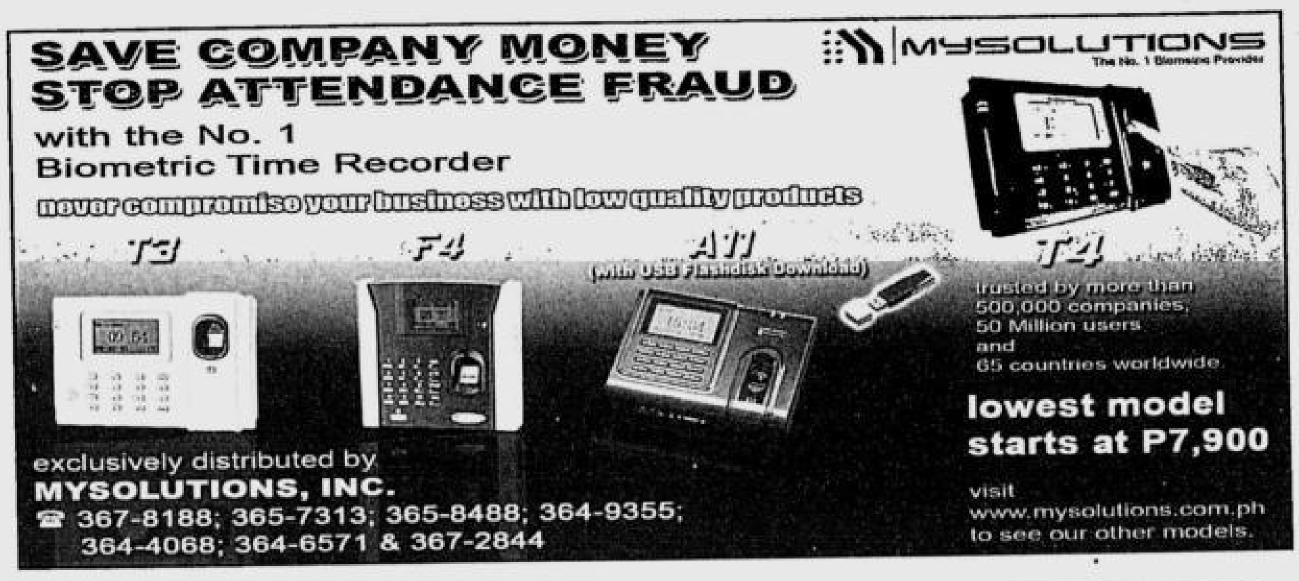

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Peso strengthens further...

From page B1

quarter, the government reported a P12-billion surplus for April.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas was suspected of buying dollars for pesos to curb the currency's strength, but that intervention was not heavy, a trader said.

Yesterday, Malacañang announced its "policy of non-intervention" in the market.

Trade Sec. Peter Favila said that the Arroyo administration would not intervene to halt the peso's growing strength.

"It is a declared policy of government (that) there will be no intervention in the market," he said. "Let the market forces take (their) course."

Across the Asia-Pacific region, currency gains were solid.

Demand for high-yielders such as the Indonesian rupiah was boosted by a rally in Asian stocks, which reacted calmly to Friday's decision by China to raise its benchmark interest rates and banks' reserve requirements.

Expectations for a pick up in yuan gains tend to benefit Asian currencies.

The yuan, now permitted to rise or fall by 0.5 percent each day versus the dollar, rather than 0.3 percent, rose as high as 7.6615, its highest level since a dollar peg was abandoned in July 2005.

The Malaysian ringgit rose to 3.3905 per dollar, its highest in just over nine years, making a decisive push through the 3.4 level that had proved a tough chart barrier for more than a week.

"The initial reaction to the China news is positive and the obvious focus is on the ringgit, because China and Malaysia depegged their currencies from the dollar at the same time," said Callum Henderson, head of currency strategy at Standard Chartered. *With reports from Michael Lim Ubac and Reuters*

Gov't fails to sell bank stake

From page B1

No. 264 during the time of President Ferdinand Marcos.

During the time of President Corazon Aquino, the Islamic bank was given the name Al-Amanah Islamic Investment Bank of the Philippines with a capital stock of P1 billion.

The bank's mandate is to promote and accelerate the socio-economic development of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao by providing banking, financing and investment operations using the concept of Islamic banking.

Al-Amanah is the only bank authorized by the government to conduct Islamic banking in the Philippines.

Shares ...

From page B1

at 3,466.34, topping last Friday's all-time closing high of 3,449.18.

The broader all-share index gained 12.28 points to 2,212.53.

Gainers trounced losers 71 to 33, while 55 stocks ended unchanged.

A total of 6.3 billion shares worth P4.9 billion (106.5 million dollars) were traded.

Meralco B shares, the most actively-traded stock, rose P2 to P89.50, while its A shares also added P2 to P89.

Ayala Land Inc., rose 25 centavos at P15.50 while Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co. added P1.50 at P65.

Market heavyweight Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. was unchanged at P2,540.

Bucking the trend was food and beverage conglomerate San Miguel Corp, whose A shares declined P5 to P71.50 while its B shares slipped P2 to P78. *AFP*

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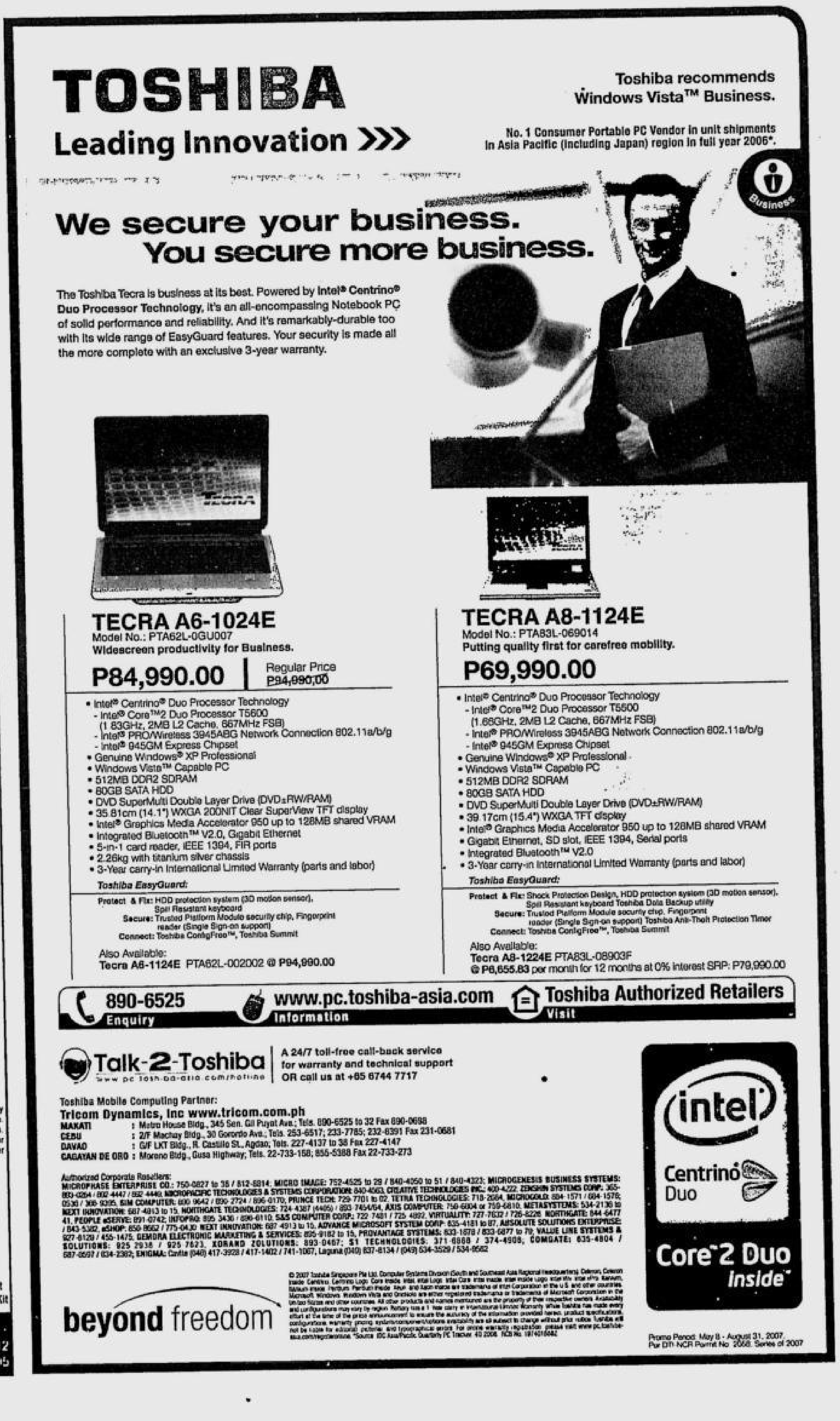

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DA draws up plans to raise agri production by 6%

By Amy R. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE has drawn up plans to increase agriculture production by 5-6 percent over the next 10 years.

"To ensure better living standards for rural families ... the government aims to increase average annual growth by at least 5-6 percent in the next 10 years," said Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap.

Yap said that because of rising crop demand for energy, environmental degradation and a growing population, the country's agriculture sector grew by an average of only 3-4 percent a year from 2001 to 2005.

It was even worse from 1996 to 1999, when the agri sector grew by only 1.95 percent a year.

To achieve its plan to raise agricultural production over the next 10 years, the department, together with more than 50 major private-sector stakeholders, drew up last week a comprehensive blueprint aimed at raising farm productivity and profitability.

The blueprint, which also aims to lift exports over the next three years, included revised growth targets and export programs for a dozen commodity groups.

Yap said these recommendations were gathered during a consultative workshop last week with over 50 industry leaders representing 12 priority subsectors namely: palay, coconut, sugar, poultry, livestock, corn, cassava, fruits, vegetables, coffee, rubber and fisheries.

To check which proposals were "doable" and "achievable," Yap is set to meet with DA officials and heads of various agencies in charge of programs to boost the productivity of these 12 critical commodities.

Groups that participated included the Philippine Association of Broiler Integrators, United Broiler Raisers Association, Confederation of Philippine Tuna Industries Inc., Philippine Sugar Millers Association, United Coconut Association of the Philippines, Philippine Association of Hog Raisers Inc., National Federation of Hog Farmers Inc., Philippine Mango Industry Foundation, Nestle Philippines Inc., Swifts Food Inc., Seaweed Industry Association of the Philippines, Veterinary Practitioners Association of the Philippines, National Onion Growers Cooperative Marketing Association and the Cocoa Foundation of the Philippines.

A FARMER works on her vegetable farm in Benguet. The Department of Agriculture is looking for ways to raise agri production by 5-6 percent a year.

Groups want local parts in PUJs

By Ronnel W. Domingo

LOCAL AUTO PARTS MAKERS have teamed up with a group of jeepney operators to develop a "Philippine-made public utility vehicle" in support of the government's plans to rehabilitate the country's jeepney fleets.

The Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturers Association of the Philippines said it had signed a memorandum of agreement with the umbrella group Philippine Jeepney Operators and Drivers Alliance Foundation as MVPMAP wraps up preparations for the launch of its "Philippine Utility Vehicle or PhUV."

MVPMAP embarked on the development of a PhUV prototype in part to convince the government to provide incentives to investors that would take part in developing a "national vehicle" using mostly local parts.

MVPMAP officials said the PUV initiative would be part of the group's PhUV campaign for perks.

It would also support the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' plan to "refleet or rehabilitate" the jeepney sector's 240,000 units spread across the country.

The PUV program is aimed at targeting the nationwide PUJ refleeting program to make the existing PUJs powered by surplus diesel engines comply with Euro standards on exhaust emission.

There are an estimated 67,000 jeepneys in Metro Manila alone.

"Public utility jeepneys are a basic form of transportation in our country and a PUJ should naturally be made with as much local value added as possible," the group said. "Thus, we came up with the PUV idea."

MVPMAP would campaign for the PUV jeepney to be part of a PhUV program of incentives from the government, the officials said.

The PUV program would also fill in the demand for a coaster-type minibus, which could be air-conditioned.

In the process, all these were expected to modernize the land transportation sector.

More Filipinos seen getting credit cards in '07

By Michelle V. Remo

THE CREDIT CARD INDUSTRY IS BENEFITING from the growing income of Filipinos.

According to Martin Cook, deputy chief executive officer of Hong Kong-Shanghai Banking Corp. (HSBC), banks with a credit card business in the Philippines expect a 10- to 12-percent growth in the number of issued credit cards this year.

"There is a rapidly increasing credit card business in the country. More and more people are generating wealth—either because of higher income from the stock market or because real estate prices are increasing, or also because more people are [joining] the workforce," Cook said in a briefing yesterday on the sidelines of the relaunching of HSBC's Premier service.

HSBC Premier, relaunched yesterday at the Manila Peninsula Hotel in Makati City, provides international banking services to customers who work or live overseas, or those who have international banking needs.

In the case of HSBC, Cook said the bank expected to grow its credit card base by 25 percent this year.

"We always try to go beyond industry average," he said.

Cook said it has 800,000 credit cards in the Philippines as of the end of last year.

The bank executive said HSBC expected the number to grow to 900,000 by June, before reaching the expected 1 million by the end of the year.

Cook said the number of credit card holders in the Philippines was still relatively small compared with those of neighboring countries.

But he noted that the penetration rate in the Philippines was starting to increase, especially with the bullish financial market in the Philippines.

HSBC's Cook said that the growing household and individual income was not only expected to benefit the credit card business, but also financial services provided by banks and other financial institutions.

DMCI Holdings nets P289 million in Q1, up 20%

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

CONSTRUCTION FIRM DMCI HOLDINGS Inc. posted a 20-percent growth in consolidated net income in the first quarter to P289 million from P241 million last year.

This was largely due to the contributions from its newly acquired water business and the boom in the real estate sector.

Last year, DMCI, with Metro Pacific Investments Corp. (MPIC), won the bid to buy Maynilad Water Services Inc.

DMCI initially invested P3 billion for a 50- percent share in DMCI-MPIC Water Company Inc. (DMWC), which holds 84 percent in Maynilad.

DMCI's net share in earnings of DMWC amounted to P137 million, accounting for much of the increase in the company's consolidated income.

Maynilad, the water concession that distributes water to the west side of Metro Manila, reported an unaudited net income of P440 million for the first quarter of 2007.

DMCI's wholly owned housing subsidiary, DMCI Project Developers Inc. (PDI), said its first quarter net income soared to P109 million from P59 million last year due to sustained demand for housing in Metro Manila.

On the other hand, DMCI's construction unit turned in a profit of P12 million in the first quarter, a reversal from a net loss of P4 million in the same period last year, due to revenue from ongoing projects.

Initial works on new projects, Shangri-La Boracay and Robinson Cybergate Tower, with a total contract amount of P1.5 billion, added P165 million to the revenues in the first quarter.

DMCI's coal mining business, operated by 58 percent-owned Semirara Mining Corp, on the other hand, did not perform as well in the first quarter with net contributions only hitting P70 million, compared to P173 million in 2006.

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INVITATION TO BID

Sealed proposal together with 10% bid bond for the purchase of the property listed below will be received at the Office of the Branch Head, Land Bank of the Philippines, Sorsogon Branch, Sorsogon City, not later than **June 8, 2007, 2:00 in the afternoon** at which place, date and time, said proposals will be opened in the presence of attending bidders.

In case of closely clustered top bids (defined as having the second highest bid which is not below 90% of the highest bid), the opening of the sealed bids will be immediately followed by an open auction in which all bidders whose bids are not below 80% of the highest bid may participate.

ITEM	PROPERTY DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	MINIMUM BID
1	Two (2) parcels of adjacent lot containing a total area of 19,143 square meters, with the following improvements/chattels: 1.1. Ice Plant Building (780 sq.ms.) 1.2. Residential Building (180 sq.ms.) 1.3. Two (2) units 30-tonner refrigeration equipment with complete accessories 1.4. One (1) unit Cummins 300 KVA generator set	Sitio Pawa, Lajong, Bulan, Sorsogon	P17,200,000.00
2	Three (3) contiguous parcels of land with total area of 3,980 sq.ms.	Sitio Pawa, Lajong, Bulan, Sorsogon	P1,500,000.00

Note: Item No. 1 is under lease until June 27, 2007.

Bidding forms may be obtained from the Office of the Branch Head, Sorsogon Branch, Land Bank of the Philippines. The sale of the properties shall be **"AS-IS-WHERE-IS"**. The winning bidder/s shall take possession of the awarded properties without seeking assistance from the Bank.

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OBITUARIES

Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life.

-John 6:47

JUDGE JUAN A. RESPICIO (Ret.)

of Laoag City

27 January 1919 - 16 May 2007

UP College of Law Class 1947, former Councilor of Laoag, Assistant Provincial Fiscal of Ilocos Norte, Assistant Fiscal of Quezon City, and RTC Judge Branch XXI Vigan City

peacefully joined our Lord and his spouse Petronila on May 16, 2007.

His children **Ameurfina**, **Evelyn** & **Afable**, **Norma**, **Juliet** & **Douglas**, **Miriam**, **Ma. Milagros**, **Juan Conrado II**, **Sigrid**, **Arnold Ronald** & **Emilyn**, **Franklin** & **Antonette**, grandchildren and great-grandchildren request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Interment will be on May 26, 2007 at the Laoag City Cemetery after the 7:30 a.m. Mass at St. Joseph Parish Church.

Notify family and friends of a loved one who had just passed away.

We accept death notices, announcing details of the person's wake and interment. For a very affordable fee you can reach out to everyone who have been a part of the life of your dearly departed.

For more information, you may contact Inquirer Classifieds at (02)897 8425.

Death Notice

EDWIN PEREJA

of Equitable Cardnetwork Inc.

joined his creator last May 20, 2007 at the age of 44.

His body lies in state at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapel in Sucat, Parañaque City.

Interment will be on Thursday, May 24, 2007.

DELIA RAMOS JIMENEZ

peacefully joined our Lord & her husband Benjamin on May 13, 2007 at the age of 66.

Her remains lie in state at Chapels [illegible]-2 Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City to be transferred to San Luis, Batangas tomorrow, May 23, 2007 for final interment on May 26, 2007 at 1:30 p.m.

CONRADO VELAYO
(DING)

passed away in the grace of our Lord on
May 19, 2007 at the age of 79.

His wife - **Mary Jane Buchanan**, his children **Karen Jane** & **Butch Angeles**, **Conrad Rhett** & **Monina**, **Mark Alexander** & **Chona**. His grandchildren **Clark, Kathryn, Nadine, Jon, Camille, Martin, Justin, Carol** and **Michael** (†), in-laws, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Viewing of the ashes will be from May 21-23, 2007 at Mt. Carmel Church in Broadway, New Manila, Quezon City.

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late
Retired Provincial Assessor of Nueva Ecija,

Atty. Lazaro Santiago Villarosa, Sr.

express our heartfelt gratitude to those who condoled with us, offered Masses and prayers, sent flowers, cards and messages of sympathy, gave donations, visited and kept vigil, attended the funeral rites and memorial services and who in some other ways expressed love, concern and support in celebration of Papa Loy's coming home to his Creator.

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race,
I have kept the faith."
2 Timothy 4

Unconditional love personified
She gave so much 'til the day she died
Purified by unspeakable pain
Eternal happiness is now her gain

On 22 May 2007, we commemorate the first death anniversary of

Carlota Cruz San Juan

30 May 1949 – 22 May 2006

beloved wife, devoted mother, doting grandmother,
dutiful daughter, loyal friend,
beautiful person

Family, friends and pious readers are requested to pray for the eternal repose of her soul. Holy Masses will be offered as follows:

St. John the Baptist Parish
Taytay, Rizal
Novena Masses (14-22 May 2007)

Sanctuario de San Jose
Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila - 6:15 a.m.

Christ the King Parish
Greenmeadows, Libis, Quezon City - 6:30 a.m.

St. Francis of Assisi Church
Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City - 6:00 a.m.

Sanctuario de San Antonio
Mc Kinley Road, Forbes Park, Makati City - 6:15 a.m.

Sancta Maria Stella Orientis Oratory
Escriva Drive, Pasig City - 7:45 a.m.

St. Paul Vigil House
Taytay, Rizal - 6:30 a.m.

San Roque Parish
Mandaluyong City - 6:00 p.m.

Holy Savior Parish
Marathon, Ontario, Canada
Novena Masses (14-22 May 2007)

Shrine of Jesus, the Way, the Truth & the Life
CBP, Reclamation Area, Pasay City - 5:30 p.m.

Our Mother of Perpetual Help-Redemptorist Parish
J.P. Laurel-Bajada, Davao City - 6:00 a.m.

PDDM Apostolic Center Chapel
1545 Agoncillo St., Ermita, Manila - 6:15 a.m.

PDDM Alberione Center Chapel
20 G. Araneta Ave., Quezon City - 6:30 a.m.

PDDM Divine Master Chapel
Antipolo City - 6:30 a.m.

PDDM Chapel of Jesus the Divine Master
16 Park Avenue, Bajada, Davao City - 6:30 a.m.

Fatima Chapel of the Daughters of St. Paul
A. Velez St., Cagayan de Oro City - 6:30 a.m.

Retired COA Asst. Commissioner

ARTURO DUMLAO DADUFALZA

(18 September 1928 - 19 May 2007)

passed away at the age of 79.

His wife **Corazon Fortich Portuguez**, daughter **Grace**, brother **Conrad** and sisters **Natividad**, **Violeta**, and **Estrella de la Cruz**, and other relatives would like to request their friends and the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

The wake is at Chapel A, La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Cremation is on Thursday, 24 May 2007 at 11:00 a.m. after the Holy Mass.

THE MISSIONARY BENEDICTINE SISTERS
St. Scholastica's Priory, Manila
announce the peaceful death of

SISTER MARY PETER QUILOP, OSB

(1928— 2007)

at St. Benedict's Home, Marikina
on May 20, 2007.

Her remains lie in state at St. Scholastica's Chapel, Manila. Interment will be at the Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque on May 23, 2007 after the 9:00 a.m. Holy Mass.

BRIG. GEN. JUANITO "JOHNNY" B. AQUIAS (RET.)

peacefully joined our Creator on May 20, 2007.

He is survived by his wife **CECILIA**, children **ANNA & EDWIN, KOOKA, RAUL & BERNA, DONDON & GINA** and **FARITA & ANGELO**, grandchildren **ISABELLA, MARGARITA, PATRICIA, GABRIEL, RAFAEL, MARTINA, JACQUELINE, ALEXA, CLAIRE, NICOLE, CESSIE, CARLA, CAMILLE** and **CARLOS**.

His remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City. His body will be transferred to the Multi-Purpose Hall, Camp Crame, Quezon City on Wednesday, May 23, 2007. A requiem mass will be held on May 24, 2007 at 8:00 a.m. Interment will follow at the Libingan Ng Mga Bayani at Fort Bonifacio, Makati City.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the Philippine Foundation for Cultural and Educational Development Inc. would be highly appreciated.

"It's hard, Yes, I know. But, Forward! No one receives the reward- and what a reward!- except those who fight bravely."
"If Love, even human love, gives so many consolation here, what will Love be like in heaven?"
St. Josemarie Escriva

TERESITA O. MALOLES

Has joined her husband "Benjamin Jr." & peacefully rests in the infinite warmth & embrace of our Lord on May 20, 2007 at the age of 69.

Her loving children **Cathy, Beth, Kit, Jojo & Doy**; their spouses **Chito, Kiko, Richard & Liza**; her ever loving grandchildren **Nico, Abby & Gio, & Michelle**, her relatives and friends request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Garden Suite of the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City.

Cremation will take place at 12 noon on Friday, May 25, 2007 after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

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BUSINESS

Chinese firm plans to build regional cargo hub in RP

Cosco willing to form joint venture with a local group

By Ronnel W. Domingo

CHINA'S LARGEST SHIPPING group, China Ocean Shipping Co., is considering building in the Philippines a cargo hub as it expands operations in the region.

Francis Chua, honorary president of the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said the Beijing-based Cosco group was looking at possible sites in Manila, Batangas and Subic.

"Cosco is already operating in Singapore and Hong Kong," Chua said. "The group wants a hub where it could aggregate United States-bound cargoes from within the region for efficient shipping."

Chua, who usually accompanies President Macapagal-Arroyo in her visits to China, added the planned project would have to secure the go-ahead from Malacañang, particularly in the selection of the prospective site of the facility.

"What Cosco wants is a big piece of land that could accommodate a pier and a container yard... about 50 hectares to 100 hectares," he said.

Cosco, he said, was willing to implement the project either through a partnership with a local private group or on its own.

Founded in 1961 as a pioneering international shipping carrier in China, Cosco is a $17-billion corporation that provides services such as freight forwarding, shipbuilding, ship repair, terminal operation, trade, financing, real estate and information technology industry.

Cosco directly owns and operates a merchant fleet of some 600 vessels with a total carrying capacity of up to 35 million dead weight tons.

Its subsidiaries—spread in Guangzhou, Shanghai, Tianjin, Qingdao, Dalian, Xiamen and Hong Kong—own and operate various types of ocean-going vessels, including container ships, bulk carriers and oil tankers.

Cosco's ships call on some 1,300 ports in 160 countries.

91-day T-bill rate drops to 2.99%

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BELLWETHER 91-day Treasury bill rate dropped to 2.996 percent yesterday, but other short-term government securities fetched higher rates amid skepticism over the sustainability of the budget-deficit reduction program.

The rate for the three-month bills was 4.8 basis points lower than the 3.044 percent recorded in the April 30 auction.

National Treasurer Omar Cruz said the drop in the 91-day T-bill rate was due to the low supply of government securities, which fell short of the demand.

The government accepted only P500 million of the P1.85 billion worth of tenders for the three-month securities.

The rates for the 182- and 364-day, however, rose. The rate for the six-month securities hit 4.274 percent from only 3.721 percent, while the one-year bills fetched 5.174 percent, up from only 3.82 percent in April.

This, according to Cruz, had to do with the fiscal performance in the first four months of the year that made the government's chances of meeting its deficit-reduction target for 2007 uncertain.

From January to April, the budget deficit hit P40 billion despite the surplus of P12 billion in April.

The government had to post P8.7 billion in surplus in May and June to keep the budget deficit in the first semester within the ceiling of P31.3 billion.

The treasurer also said the move of the Bankgo Sentral ng Pilipinas to siphon off excess liquidity in the system can also be cited as reason for the rise in the rates for the six-month and one-year T-bills.

"The market has priced the fiscal slippage and the monetary position of the country. The auction committee was compelled to accept the bids (despite an increase in the rates) because tenders were much higher than the offer size," Cruz said in a briefing after the auction held yesterday at the Bureau of the Treasury.

He said the government could only reject bids if the volumes were low, which means a lack of market interest. But in this case, he explained, the high volume of bids meant the increase in interest rate was dictated by market forces.

Bids for the 182-day bills reached P4.965 billion. The government accepted only P1.5 billion, just raising what has been the programmed.

Tenders for the 364-day bills amounted to P8.02 billion compared with the government's debt offering of only P3 billion.

The BSP has implemented since May 10 the offering of special interest rates for deposits of government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs). The move was intended to encourage these state-owned firms to park more of their funds to the BSP as a way to mop up excess money supply in the system.

The BSP said it had to mop up excess liquidity to address the risk of having the government's inflation targets breached.

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Foreign firms urged to invest in oil, gas

AFTER MAPPING OUT ITS PLANS for its Philippine petroleum service contracts, Australian firm Nido Petroleum Corp. is now urging other foreign companies to invest in the country.

Nido managing director David Whitby said the country had a great potential in terms of oil and gas discoveries. All it needed were companies that were willing to invest in the development of its petroleum potential.

Proof of the country's huge potential, he said, was Nido's service contracts in the Northwest Palawan basin.

He said this area was particularly promising as it was near the Camago-Malampaya field.

"Good exploration acreage is hard to find. What we have in Northwest Palawan is a world-class basin. We're happy to have been there first," he said. "We have to educate the world on the potential of the Philippines. We feel very passionate about the industry and the country."

He said the declaration of the Mining Act as constitutional, which in turn allowed foreign firms to engage in mining and petroleum exploration businesses in the country, provided a big boost to the upstream oil and gas sector.

Nido actually believed in the Philippines so much that it was considering going public here.

Abigail L. Ho

Strengthening Partnership through
Efficient Payment Distribution

The groundbreaking partnership between GXI and Citi GTS was formalized by (L to R) GXI Head for Financial and Government Services Paolo Baltao, GXI President Rizza Maniego-Eala, Citi GTS Head for Asia Pacific Anthony Nappi, Citi GTS Head for the Philippines J. Antonio Itchon, and Citi Regional Payments Head for Asia Pacific Akash Rathke.

Citi and GXI expand global remittances through GCash

Citi's Global Transaction Services (GTS) has announced a partnership with G-Xchange, Inc. (GXI), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Globe Telecom, to provide global remittance services through GCash, the revolutionary award-winning electronic payment system from GXI, to further expand the boundaries of mobile commerce.

GXI's partnership with Citi's GTS division enables GCash customers to receive payments from remitters in countries where Citi's cross-border payment services are available. In addition, Citi stands to significantly increase its remittance distribution network for domestic payments in the Philippines. The partnership is a first step towards a wide range of possible synergies, such as wireless payment for services, products, utilities or even salaries through the mobility of GCash and the secure and robust technology platforms of Citi.

The Memorandum of Agreement between GXI and Citi was recently signed by Rizza Maniego-Eala, GXI President; Paolo Baltao, GXI Financial and Government Services Head; and Antonio Itchon, Director and Country Head of Citi's Global Transaction Services. Anthony Nappi, Asia-Pacific CEO for Citi's Global Transaction Services and Akash Rathke, Managing Director and Regional Head of Global Payments at Citi, also attended the signing ceremony.

"This partnership epitomizes the innovation and leadership that Citi has always stood for," Anthony said. "GCash's ability to extend financial services across borders gives it a leading edge in the market. We certainly look forward to finding new, innovative ways to develop this partnership," he added.

"Having Citi as a major partner in the GCash ecosystem is consistent with our open platform strategy and is a vital step towards further developing an enhanced business model that is capable of delivering a wide range of mobile financial services to a global audience," Rizza said.

More people will now be able to avail of the convenience and ease of use of GCash coupled with the global pervasiveness and dependability of Citi. Over time, more and more mobile subscribers will soon be able to send and receive remittances, purchase goods and services, or even pay micro-loans using a mobile phone almost anywhere in the world, thanks to GCash and Citi.

Observing the proceedings are (L to R) Citi officers Arlene Nethercott, Edu Olbes, Patricia Olbes, and Agnes Mondonedo.

Efficient Payment Distribution

Joining the signatories are (standing, L to R) Citi officers Edu Olbes, Arlene Nethercott, Agnes Mondonedo, Patricia Olbes, Martin Tirol, and Mike David.

citi GCASH POWER TO THE PEOPLE! ang lakas mo sa Globe™

Asean deal on airfreight service seen signed in Nov.

By Riza T. Olchondra

PREPARATIONS FOR THE FULL LIBERALIZATION of airfreight service in Southeast Asia reached the final stages following the incorporation of a code of conduct into a proposed new liberalization deal on air services among members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean), an aviation official said.

The code of conduct spells out the need for region-wide provisions on fair competition, such as the use of computerized reservation systems and transparency on state aid and subsidy.

"Following an extensive deliberation and (despite) the opposition of many Asean countries to the RP proposal, the meeting was able to reach a compromise and produce an improved text," said Porvenir P. Porciuncula, Civil Aviation Board (CAB) deputy executive director and leader of the Philippine delegation to last month's Asean Air Transport Working Group (ATWG) meeting in Indonesia.

"This paves the way for the possible signing of the Asean Multilateral Agreements on Air Freight Services in the next Asean Transport Meeting in November," he said.

The original memorandum of agreement was signed on Sept. 19, 2002 as a first step toward the liberalization of air cargo services in the region. It allows the designated airlines of each Asean member-country to operate all-cargo services of up to 100 tons weekly with no limitation on frequency and aircraft type.

A proposed amendment allows Asean countries to increase the tonnage for all-cargo services up to 250 tons per week in each direction. The draft amendment also said there will be no limit on flight frequency and on using any type of aircraft between designated points.

The Philippines thus urged the opening up of more airports with significant cargo volume to encourage more and better connections for cargo flights.

Porciuncula said this would "be consistent with the objectives of the free flow of services in Asean integration, which will support the Asean Economic Community."

Bangko Sentral secures ₱2B in GOCC deposits

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS HAS obtained P1.9 billion worth of special deposits from pension funds and government-owned and -controlled corporations and it was expecting to raise the amount to P15 billion through the new window opened to the public corporate sector.

Since the May 10 implementation of reforms that made the special deposit account (SDA) a more powerful monetary tool and opened access to nonbank state corporations, BSP sources said only two GOCCs and one pension fund had so far tapped the facility. The three were the Social Security System, Philippine National Oil Co. and the National Development Co., BSP sources said.

Under the new SDA rules, banks and their trust departments, as well as nonbank state corporations can place funds with the BSP and earn various interest rates depending on the term of the placements. These need not be backed by collateral unlike the central bank's overnight borrowings.

Monetary officials hope that another pension fund, Government Service Insurance System, would deposit a portion of its P17.6 billion worth of membership collection with the BSP to take advantage of the higher interest rates.

State-owned Land Bank of the Philippines and Development Bank of the Philippines had tried to lobby against the opening of the SDA facility. But the BSP, in line with efforts to keep the sharp growth in domestic liquidity in check, still pursued the new measure.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said on Friday that the opening of the SDA facility to the government corporate sector would not have a significant impact on state-owned lenders, because the target sector represented only a small portion of these banks' source of funds.

"We're not competing with the local banks. This is just a temporary measure," a BSP source said.

The sources said the central bank expects to mop up over P200 billion in money supply from the market over time to bring down the broad money growth to below 20 percent.

Domestic liquidity or m3 is the broadest measure of money and is used to estimate the entire supply of money within an economy. It includes money in circulation, demand deposits, money market funds and short-term repurchase agreements.

Prior to the fine-tuning of the SDA rules, this facility was observed to be underutilized, generating only P60 billion in placements as against some P2.85 trillion broad money in circulation.

IN THIS ISSUE

How not to write about your own birthday /C2

LifeStyle

Website: www.inquirer.net/lifestyle

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

sms feedback: inquirer life name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 386 (Smart) **or email us at** lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

Well and Good columnist Tina Aboitiz-Juan is on leave

MONDAY **ARTS & BOOKS** ● TUESDAY **FITNESS** ● WEDNESDAY **2BU** ● THURSDAY **FOOD** ● FRIDAY **FASHION & BEAUTY**

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

Keeping trim and fit need not be painful

Eat more vegetables and fruits, less meat and carbs; never drop a major food group

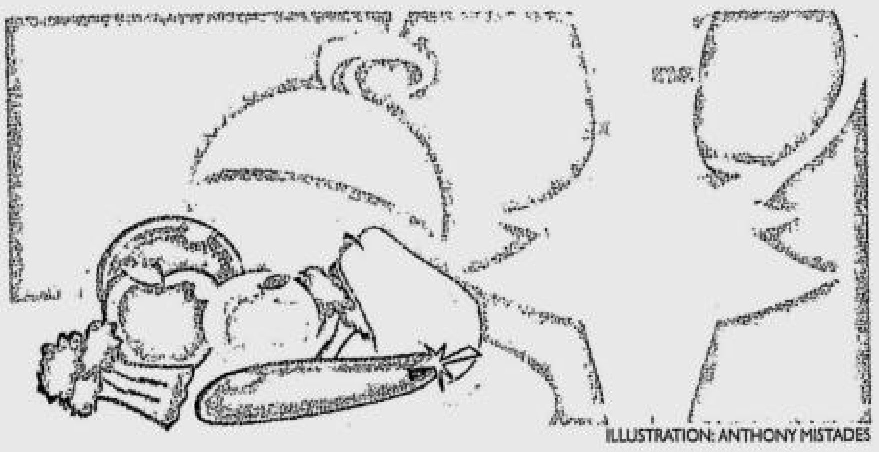


ILLUSTRATION: ANTHONY MISTADES

DO YOU WANT TO PUT someone half your age to shame?

If your answer is yes, then read on. It is not as difficult as it may seem. You can develop a healthy habit or two that will make you look and feel better.

Fit tummy

While your concern at this moment may be external, remember that the tummy "problem" can be better addressed internally.

In short, if your waistline needs trimming, you have to control your intake of food. That is all. Sounds simple, doesn't it? Here's how.

- Program your mind to eat less. Know that less is more. Less food, more sexy.
- There is a fine line between food reduction and starvation. Food deprivation/denial is not a safe diet. This will eventually lead to malnutrition and illness.
- Eating too much, however, presents problems, too, such as weight gain, obesity, diabetes, hypertension.
- The best practice of all is to eat a little bit of everything and not plenty of only one food group, like carbohydrates. Diets high in refined flour, sugar and carbohydrates, with little vegetable intake, can produce an unfit tummy. Diets too high in protein may lead to kidney overload.
- Digestive disorders can become prevalent such as indigestion, irritable bowel syndrome, gastritis, constipation, etc.

Brain enhancer

Most people who reduce carbo in their diets will notice an almost instant weight loss (especially when combined with exercise).

However, total carbo removal is dangerous to brain health as glucose, the chief source of its food comes from carbohydrates.

Eat good carbs instead of bad carbs. These include whole-grain foods and vegetables like squash, cauliflower, broccoli.

Limit intake of baked goods, sweets, pasta from white flour, white breads, etc.

Still hard-headed about this issue? You prefer to protect your waistline at the cost of your brain health?

Know that your abilities for concentration, creative thinking and overall balance of the mind will be hampered. That is the price you will pay.

Eventually, this kind of self-styled regimen will lead to a breakdown of your body, as well as your brain.

No-chemical regimen

Stop all chemical or drug-related diet plans. The fad these days is to drink prepared formulas that are high in caffeine, ephedrine, etc. as meal substitutes. This is tantamount to starvation or diet based on "speed."

Sure, you get a boost of energy and your appetite is controlled but you are slowly wasting away. Besides, it is no fun to see a man or a woman sitting at a banquet and just staring at the food.

If you want a quick trimming program, eat more vegetables and fruits and less meat and carbs. But absolutely do not drop a major food group.

Cleanse your system

A healthy colon is the secret to great skin, high energy and general good health.

Do the following:

- Increase water and non-chemical liquid intake.
- Fast once a month (hydrate with coconut water, water and fresh vegetable juice—carrot/apple, romaine lettuce, sugar bits).
- Sweat. It's a great way to release toxins. Exercise regularly. Plain brisk walking for 30 minutes daily is good enough.
- Have a weekly organic coffee enema. For more information, call Dr. Omar Arabia at 4266363 or 9296090.

The timeless message of Hippocrates, father of medicine, bears repeating: "Let food be your medicine."

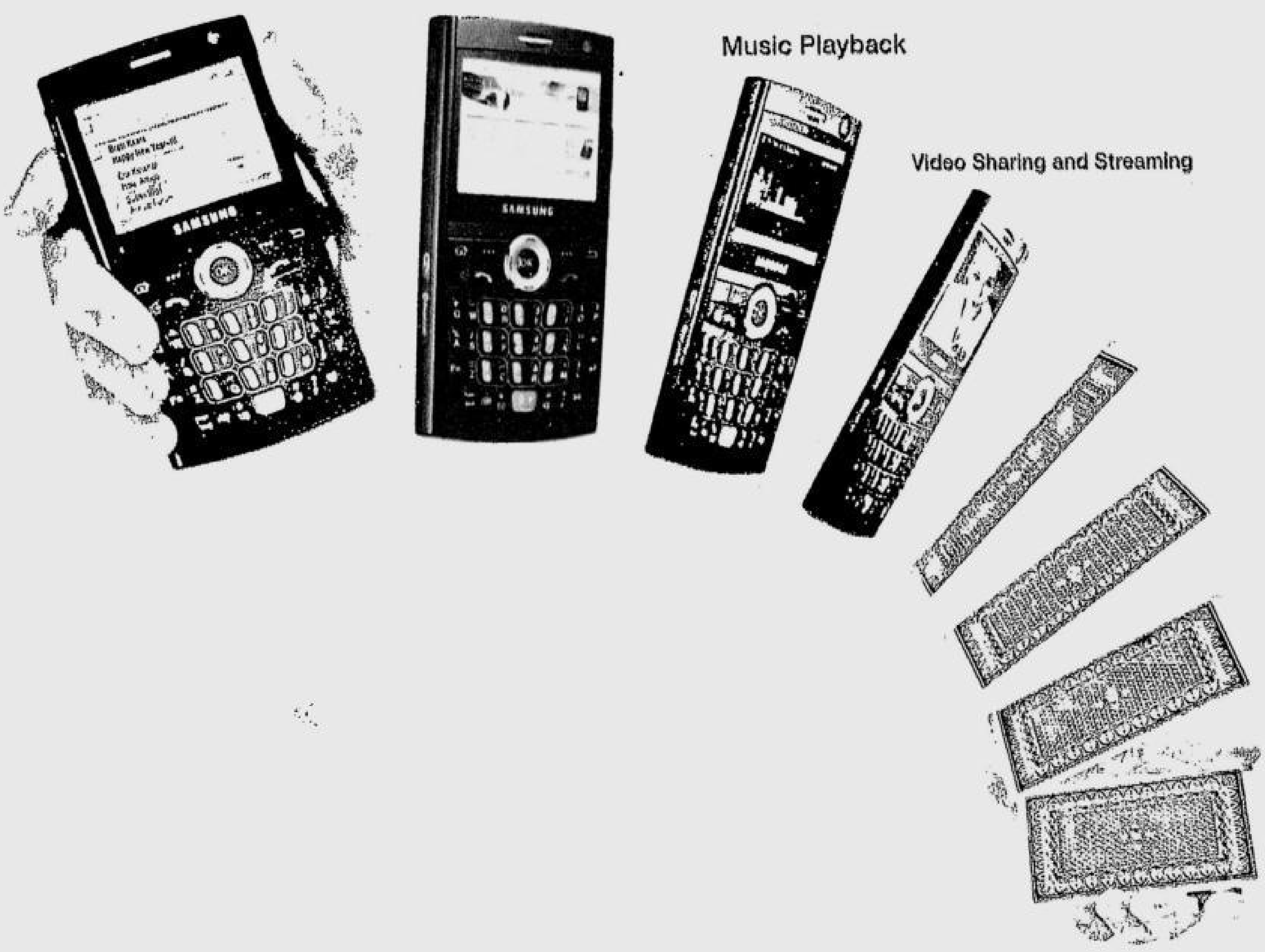
I ask: "If food is medicine for the body, what is the food for the heart?"

Happy choice

If you choose to be happy, then your choices in life will be happy as well.

Here's a simple technique: Work backward. In short, always see the result of your actions by the choices you make. This includes your choice of food for the body as well as food for the heart.

Love and light!



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CHONA Lopez, Myrna Borromeo and Tessie Rodrigo

GILDA Salonga and Linda Pastoral

TESSIE Amparo and Rep. Cynthia Villar

CRISTINA Ponce Enrile, Diana Santos and Loleng Panlilio

EVIE Costa, Letty Santos; (standing) Nori Ongsiako, Roi Phillips

THE CELEBRATOR with hostesses Tereret Liboro, Agnes Huibonhua, Fortune Ledesma, May Neri, Nini Licaros, Chit Salud, Nene Leonor and Mellie Ablaza

TESSIE Briones and Luz Cullen

YOLY Ayson and Monnette Guevarra

Another milestone for 'society chronicler'

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen using **Kodak** EasyShare system

SINCE *MOI* DON'T REALLY CARE to write about my own birthday, one of the invitees volunteered to do it. So without batting an eyelash, here it is, *palanggas*:

"The Southern aristocratic chronicler, who is the darlingest of the *palanggas* this side of town, **Maurice Arcache**, but of course, was fitted to a belated birthday bash at **Nini Licaros**' sprawling, gorgeous residence in North Forbes Park, hosted by such names in the A-list of significance as **Nene Leonor**; **Fortune Ledesma**; **Chit Salud**; **May Neri**; **Mellie Ablaza**; **Karen Macasaet**; **Agnes Huibonhua**; **Tereret Liboro**; **Naty Pappas** and close friend of the celebrator, **Nini Licaros**, *naturellement* with no less than the senator, Dr. **Loi Ejercito**, and Dra. **Elenita Binay** as his special guests of honor.

"We saw our dearest *palangga* feeling absolutely exuberant over the turn of guests who came in dressed to the nines to honor dear Maurice with their luminous presence. For the record, some of the VIP invitees were:

"**Justa Tantoco, Mely Hechanova, Diana Go, Olga Martel, Dette Tan, Betsy Tenchavez, Nini Valdez, Susan Medina, Roi Phillips, Nini Layug, Pitang Tiongson Lopez, Mabel Abaño, Pacita de Guzman, Tessie Briones, Mimi Valerio, Nonie Basilio, Letty Santos, Evie Costa, Nori Ongsiako, Myrna Borromeo, Mars Lambino, Offie Recto, Baby de Jesus, Cecile Limjoco, Glenn Gale, Donnie Ramirez, Cory Quirino, Rep. Cynthia Villar, Tessie Rodrigo, Naty Golez, Letty Syquia, Sandie Poblador, Maritess Pineda, Marieliese Evaristo, Cristina Ponce Enrile, Diana Santos, Loleng Panlilio, Tessie Amparo, Resty Vergara, Marjo Ferraren, Luz Cullen, Yaying Dragon and Linda Pastoral**, among so many others like them.

"**Fortune Ledesma** asked the celebrator, 'And how many moons old are you?' Then she continued, 'Ah, never mind. For such a great person like you, age or aging is of no big consequence really. The lasting beauty of character and strength of the human spirit in you that generate incessantly to others is what is more fundamental.'

Cheers to our dear *palangga*!"

Revolutionary

The place was packed elbow to elbow and it wasn't the Embassy Club but the upscale Ayala Museum, no less, *palanggas*, where the cool, oh so refreshing Eucalyptus Rush! of Astring-O-Sol Ice Extreme hosted the launch of our very own Tim Yap's video book, "Rush!," *naturellement*.

The video book featured celebrated personalities whose dynamic lifestyles truly encapsulate the very meaning of rush, dahlings.

Among them were the radio jock who gave his interviewees a rush, **Mo Twister**; beautiful women who give men a rush, **Ornussa Cadness, Iya Villania, Helena Belmonte** and **Divine Lee**; fast-paced baller **Doug Kramer**; musician rushman **Raymond Marasigan**; female rush-evoker **Victor Basa**; Preview's **Pauline Suaco Juan**; and always rushing there, there and everywhere **Tim Yap**.

Hey, check out the photos, *palanggas*, of many hotshots who rushed to this happening and to experience the extremely cool Eucalyptus Rush flavor for a total blast of freshness that gives extreme protection from the time you drop until you get up.

The slogan of the revolutionary mouthwash that combats morning breath goes, "You no longer have to worry about bad breath all day or all night long."

Going the distance

Avid triathlete and Adidas Philippines managing director **Joey Singian** declared, "This is a very exciting year for running," as we all watched tons of running enthusiasts in Alabang Town Center participate in Adidas' brilliant Test Run 28, *palanggas*.

The first and only one of its kind, Test Run 28 is an aggressive program where customers who buy the Adidas range of running footwear have 28 days to test the shoes, would you believe? And if you are not satisfied, you'll get gift certificates equivalent to the price of the shoes.

"The TR28 concept is designed to match perfectly a running shoe to the running style unique to every individual," explained **Goody Custodio**, Adidas sports marketing manager, *palanggas*.

Adidas has also launched the King of the Road (KOTR) marathon series to encourage people to keep running. After being held in Baguio City and Davao, the latest event was staged in Fort Bonifacio, dahlings.

Après Joey S. fired a shot signaling the start of the race, participants ran 10K in the spirit of friendly competition.

The KOTR series will have its national grand finals at the Quirino Grand Stand on July 1, *palanggas*.

Check out Test Run 28 at the Adidas store nearest you.

Go for it, *palanggas*! Gear up and run!

Future of digital color

Hey, Samsung Electronics did it again, *palanggas*, when they showed us their latest range of premium IT products from printers to LCD (liquid crystal display) monitors to meet the increasing demand of buyers for high-grade visual quality and clarity.

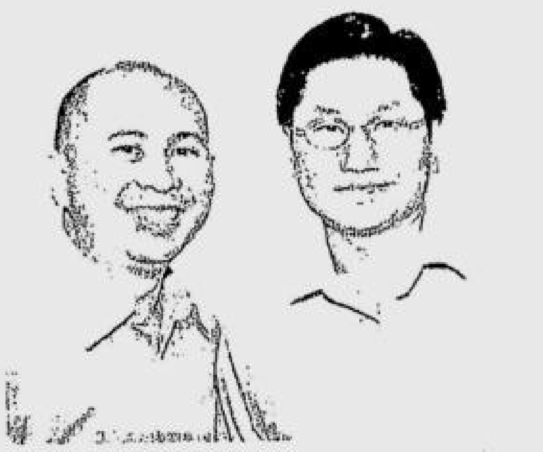
During the launch, *moi* couldn't believe Samsung's latest smallest color laser printer, the Samsung CLP-300, weighing just 13.6 k and covering an area as small as an open magazine.

"The introduction of this compact laser printer today marks another milestone as it further revolutionizes the color laser printer as a desktop companion for individual use," said **Bong Wan Kim**, Samsung hotshot vice president for IT, dahlings.

Aprés cocktails and yummy finger food, the spotlight shone on the Samsung Large Format display monitor that achieves a flawless balance that "does not sacrifice brightness or contrast for that perfect picture."

And, finally, Samsung's first slot-in external DVD drive that could hold up to 8-cm discs plus tons of other Samsung hot new products were unveiled, *palanggas*.

Then it was time to circulate and socialize with tons of Samsung hotshots and other invitees, dahlings.


SAMSUNG'S Arsie Dienzo II with CTI's José Ramos

HOTSHOTS behind Samsung's success Samsung vice president for IT Bong Wan Kim, Jimmy Go, president for MSI-ECS; and Spencer Shim, Samsung Phils. president and CEO

DRA. ELENITA Binay, Sen. Loi Ejercito, *moi* and Justa Tantoco

ROSITA Co and Jenny Napoles

NUTRITIONIST Luchie Callanta gives TR28 participants tips at the diet and nutrition booth.

A PARTICIPANT must have the right Adidas running shoe.

89.9 DWTM DJs King DJ Logan, Tony Tony, Slick Rick; model Andi 9, Joey Singian, Adidas managing director; Marecil Maquilan, Female KOTR winner; Jujet de Asis, Male KOTR winner

AT THE KOTR run were Ronnie Magsanoc, assistant coach for the Purefoods basketball team; Goody Custodio, Adidas sports marketing manager; Joel Orense, Adidas CFO; Singian, and Odette Velarde, Adidas marketing communications manager

RUSHING to pose for Astring-O-Sol Ice Extreme Eucalyptus Rush! are Helen Belmonte, Divine Lee, Pauline Juan, Tim Yap, Victor Basa and Iya Villania.

ATOM Henares, with Marcel Crespo and his love Celine Lopez

PRETTY, pretty eye-catcher Priscilla Mireilles

INNER AWARENESS
Jaime Licauco

Body-mind techniques help heal people

SINCE 1988, I HAVE been running programs in my Inner Mind Development Institute to train people on the use of their brains to heal themselves through visualization and stress control.

At the time, very few medical doctors realized the importance of my work. Most of them considered such training programs nonsensical.

All that may change pretty soon. There is now incontrovertible scientific evidence about the crucial role of our mind in controlling certain illnesses.

In its May 2007 issue, for example, the Readers' Digest (Asian Edition) reported the findings of Dr. Kevin Tracey after years of careful experiments.

Tracey, a neurosurgeon, immunologist and director of the Feinstein Institute of Medical Research in Manhasset, New York, showed how our brain might actually help our body's immune system to fight disease.

According to the magazine, "In a series of studies since 2000, he's shown that stimulation of the vagus nerve—a major nerve that runs from our brain stem to our belly and regulates our heartbeat, breathing and intestines—stops severe sepsis.

"Sepsis is a condition in which the immune system massively reacts to a bacterial infection, indiscriminately training its canons on the body's own tissues.

"It stops this self-destructive process by using neuro-chemicals to signal immune cells, which prevents them from releasing alarm molecules that spur inflammation and cause damage. In a 2006 study, he discovered a brain circuit that could stimulate the vagus nerve to switch off inflammation."

Meditation helps

Tracey acknowledged that meditation could help, too, in the fight against disease. "People," according to him, "can learn to slow down their heartbeat by modifying vagus nerve activity, which suggests they might be able to control their own brains to calm inflammation and fight disease."

Calming the mind and body through certain mental techniques can even slow down the spread of diseases like cancer.

Dr. Carl Simonton, a cancer specialist, has shown for decades that by visualizing white cells fighting cancer cells symbolically or metaphorically, certain forms of cancer can be controlled.

Although his method was first junked by the medical community, it is now being taken seriously by certain hospitals in the west.

And a new branch of medicine has emerged with the tongue-twisting name of "psychoneuroimmunology" that studies the connection among the mind, emotions, and immune system.

According to a director of the National Institute of Mental Health, "Studies like Glaser's and Tracey's have given credibility to mind-body approaches which have been rejected and ignored by the scientific and medical communities. Now, scientists have begun taking the next step, harnessing the powers of the human brain to help people heal themselves."

The Readers' Digest reported the work of a biotech company that trained people to "reduce chronic pain by visualizing and learning to control it." And some were able to do so by more than 40 percent.

Well, in my Inner Mind Development seminar, I teach a powerful visualization technique to control pain and some are able to do so with 100-percent effectiveness.

Of course, not all succeed in doing so, for a variety of reasons. First, because of lack of concentration; second, failure to slow down their brain waves to the alpha level, and to relax; and third, perhaps the. presence of other disturbing factors.

Documented success

But we have documented cases showing the success of such visualization techniques taught in my seminar, like the case of a 35-year-old accountant with myoma as big as a fist, an architect with chronic asthmatic condition, a mining engineer with severe back pain, and a female industrial engineer with herniated disc.

With just a single visualization session in class, they were all relieved of their sickness.

I am glad that such body-mind techniques are no longer objects of ridicule by the medical and scientific communities abroad. I hope such an open-minded attitude toward alternative modalities of therapy will also begin to influence medical practitioners in the Philippines.

They have nothing to lose but their skepticism.

Note: For inquiries on books, paranormal services and seminars on Inner Mind Development, ESP and Intuition Development, and Soulmates, Karma & Reincarnation conducted by this writer, call 8107245 or 8926806; fax 8159890.

E-mail the author at innerawareness_2005@yahoo.com.ph

Lectures on alternative treatment for cancer

THE PHILIPPINE COLLEGE FOR THE Advancement in Medicine (PCAM) will hold a lecture on US FDA-approved alternative medical procedures that result in 70-percent survival rate for Stage 4 and terminal cancer patients on May 29, 5:30-9:30 p.m., at the Grand Men Seng Hotel, Davao, and on June 2, 5:30-9:30 p.m., at Cebu Country Club, Cebu City.

The lecturer, professor Xu Kecheng, MD, is the president of Fuda Cancer Hospital in Guangzhou, China, where the results were obtained. Xu and his team use Cryosurgery, an alternative to conventional surgery; Photodynamic Therapy, an alternative to radiation; and Immunotherapy, an alternative to chemotherapy. These medical procedures are found to be safer and much less costly than conventional methods.

Cryosurgery removes tumors without disfiguring the patient.

It can also tackle more difficult tumors in the liver, lung and prostate, even those that are no longer operable with conventional surgery. The procedure freezes the tumor into an ice ball, thaws it and melts it away in 15 minutes.

Photodynamic Therapy removes more serious tumors like those in the tongue and in the colon which Cryosurgery cannot tackle.

Immunotherapy is normally recommended after the above procedures. This involves the creation of an anticancer vaccine made from the patient's own blood resulting in zero side effects.

Xu will hold two days of free consultations after the lectures, on May 30-31 in Davao, June 3-4 in Cebu.

To preregister for Davao, call 082-2268160 or 0921-3986523. For Cebu, call 032-2310345 or 0927-2930229. Onsite registration starts 5:30 p.m.; dinner, 6:30 p.m.; lecture is at 7-9:30 p.m.

Your Doctor Knows Best

Felicitas I. Artiaga-Soriano, MD, FPPA

Question:
My friend was diagnosed to have schizophrenia. What is it? How can I help her?

Doctor Says...

Schizophrenia is a chronic, severe and disabling mental illness. Schizophrenia is the fourth leading cause of disability in the developed world (for ages 15-44). It affects men and women with equal frequency. Contrary to the common misconception, schizophrenia does not mean "split or multiple personality." Although people with schizophrenia often are portrayed as violent on television and in movies, that is seldom the case. Schizophrenia is:

- A brain disease, with concrete and specific symptoms due to physical and biochemical changes in the brain (imbalance in the brain chemicals – dopamine, serotonin and norepinephrine that regulate thoughts and emotions)
- An illness that strikes young people in their prime – age of onset is usually between 16 and 25. In rare instances, children as young as five have been diagnosed with the illness. They are often described as being different from other children at an early age. Most people with schizophrenia, however, do not show recognizable symptoms until adolescence or young adulthood
- Almost always treatable with medication
- More common than most people think. It affects 1 in 100 people worldwide. Therefore if we are 86 million in the Philippines, there are approximately 860,000 Filipinos with schizophrenia.

There is no way of knowing exactly who will get schizophrenia. Since schizophrenia tends to run in families, your chances may be higher if someone in your family has the disease. Drugs (including alcohol, tobacco, and street drugs) do not directly cause schizophrenia, but these can trigger a psychotic episode if one has a predisposition for it.

Commonly known as insanity or madness, schizophrenia is a chronic psychotic disorder. Schizophrenia results in fluctuating, gradually deteriorating, or relatively stable disturbances in thinking, behavior, and perception. Severity can range from mild and subtle with very good adaptation to everyday life, to severely disabling requiring constant supervision in a restricted environment.

The symptoms, treatment and outcomes of schizophrenia will be discussed in next week's column. For more information on schizophrenia, please consult your doctor.

***Dr. Soriano** is a Psychiatrist. She is an active consultant at the UERMM Medical Center and Veterans Memorial Medical Center. She holds clinics at the UERMM Medical Center. Dr. Soriano is an Assistant Professor of the University of the East, College of Medicine.*

This column is supported by AstraZeneca Philippines as part of its disease awareness campaign. This is not intended to replace the advice of a healthcare professional. Always consult your doctor.

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How Vic Sotto stays fit

IF YOU SEE VIC SOTTO IN OLD clips of the television sitcom "Iskul Bukol," you would notice that he has kept his lean figure all these years.

Still one of the most bankable stars on TV and the movies, how does Sotto, one of the pillars of the country's longest-running and top-rating noontime variety show, "Eat Bulaga," cope with the rigors of show business and stay on top of the game?

The actor exercises regularly, playing golf in the morning and billiards at night. He says he walks 6-7 km to play 18 holes of golf. Billiards, he adds, also involves a lot of walking.

He also credits clean leaving and good eating habits for his ability to stay fit.

For one, he has stopped smoking. His recent executive medical checkup resulted in a clean bill of health.

Sotto says he does not have a strict health routine but he is careful about what he eats.

The actor/comedian says he avoids junk food and only eats "when it is time to eat."

A constant item in Sotto's diet is fish, especially tuna, an excellent source of lean protein, vitamins and minerals, and omega-3 that can help lower the risk of heart disease.

CENTURY Canning marketing manager Ayet Evangelista, 555 Tuna celebrity endorser Vic Sotto and film director Erik Matti

His passion for healthy food made him an ideal endorser for 555 Tuna. He stars in the new 555 Tuna TV commercial filled with the fantasy and funny elements of his blockbuster movies.

Conceptualized by the agency of the year, TBWA/Santiago, Mangada & Puno, it is directed by Erik Matti.

Sotto says he likes all of 555's flavors like *afritada*, *mechado*, *adobo* and *sisig*. But *sisig* is his favorite.

The new 555 Tuna endorser will soon be seen with the Comedy King himself, Dolphy, in another project for the Metro Manila Film Fest, and a new TV sitcom to replace "Daddy Di Do Du."

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The soap's scent is a mixture of woody and citrus fragrances.

Dial For Men also features Dial Body Wash (18 oz) and Dial Bar Soap (2x4.5 oz).

Available in all Watsons and SM Supermarkets nationwide.

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For Men
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WITHOUT DRYING SKIN
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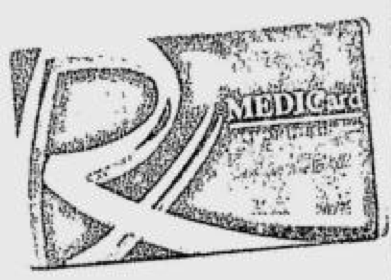
MEDICard The Healthcare I Deserve

Take Charge Doc!

What are the natural methods for family planning?

The natural methods of family planning are the following: 1. Abstinence, This is the avoidance of sexual activity. It is the most effective natural method of family planning. 2. The Calendar or rhythm method, it is suitable for women with regular 28 to 30 days cycle. The patient is made aware of her safe and unsafe period in her monthly menstrual cycle. The safe period includes the first 8 days of her monthly period, (beginning on the first day of her menses) and 8 days before her expected menses of the succeeding cycle. The days inclusive of these periods are safe for unprotected sexual activity. The unsafe period starts from the 9th day to the 21st day of menstrual cycle. The fertile period or ovulation of the woman is included in the unsafe period. She is likely to get pregnant if she engages in sexual activity without any form of contraception. During ovulation, the woman may observe moderate amount of slippery raw egg-white like discharge. 3. Condom, it is a rubberized contraceptive device which the men use during sexual act. It serves as a pouch for collecting the seminal fluid containing the sperm cells. This way, the sperm cells are prevented from swimming up into the womb after ejaculation, ultimately preventing the fertilization of the egg cell and pregnancy. I believe almost every mature adult is familiar with its use. It is disposable and never reusable. 4. Withdrawal method or coitus interruptus, this method requires the withdrawal of the male sex organ just prior to ejaculation during sexual act. Ejaculation is achieved outside the female sex organ. This is the most unreliable method of family planning. It requires good control of sexual emotions on the part of the male partner. Small amounts of pre-ejaculatory seminal fluid may also be released in the course of sexual act that can lead to unexpected pregnancy. You should know your family planning methods and practice responsible parenthood. No to abortion! Every child born is a gift of love. May we always be delighted in God's glorious mercy on us.



Dr. Lilia Chua provides us with this week's discussion on Family Planning. Dr. Chua, a medicine graduate of FEU-NRMF, took her residency training for OB-Gynecology in St. Luke's Medical Center and later had her sub-specialization in OB-Gynecology Ultrasound at the same institution. She is a fellow of the Philippine Obstetrics & Gynecology Society and the Philippine Society of Ultrasound in OB-Gynecology. She is also a member of the Philippine Society of Climacteric Medicine and the PMA-Tarlac Chapter. MEDICard members may avail for her consultations at Central Luzon Doctors Hospital from Monday to Thursday 10am-1pm and 3-5pm at Jecsons Medical Center.

MEDICard's Medical Director, Dr. Nicky Montoya answers questions on health through the assistance and expertise of MEDICard's network of accredited specialists. Write to Dr. Nicky or E-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com for your inquiries on health matters.

Nicky

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Tee off with the world's best in Florida

JACK Nicklaus marries function and fashion on the golf course with its red Maxwear striped shirt for men matched with stretchable slacks in stone color. Women will go gaga over the collection's knitted cardigans and trendy spandex pedal pushers.

THINK YOU AND your golf buddy can hold your own on the green and swing with the pros?

Join the Jack Nicklaus International Invitational (JNII) tournament local qualifying round on June 25 at the Tagaytay Highlands (Midlands course) Golf & Country Club.

Dubbed the "Tournament of Champions," the local qualifying round seeks the best two-man team in a scramble tournament.

The competition is open to all male and female amateur golfers who are 21 years old and above and holders of valid Philippine passports.

International clothing brand Jack Nicklaus will send the winning duo to represent the Philippines and tee off among the world's best amateur golfers at the second JNII tournament on Sept. 18 at The Bear's Club, in Jupiter, Florida.

To join, you and your golf buddy must each meet a qualifying purchase from the Jack Nicklaus collection of stylish, high-performance sports and leisure wear.

The purchase entitles the buyer to a registration form which should be accomplished and submitted to the store on or before 9 p.m. of June 20.

Qualified registrants will be notified through registered mail or phone call.

At the tournament, breakfast, lunch and green fees will be shouldered by the organizer.

Apart from a championship trophy and the honor of representing the Philippines at the second JNII in Florida, the winning tandem will be given round-trip plane tickets plus four day-and-three night hotel accommodations with full meals at The Bear's Club Hotel and Resort Spa.

The second placers will enjoy round-trip plane tickets to Hong Kong courtesy of Cathay Pacific, and the third prize winners will get a three day-two night stay for four at El Nido Resort in Palawan with full meals and round-trip plane tickets.

Visit any of the participating Jack Nicklaus outlets at Rustan's Department Stores (Makati, Shangri-La Mall, Alabang, Gateway Mall, Robinson's Place Manila, and Cebu) and at SM Makati and Clark.

LADY golfers who want to look and feel their best on the greens will never go wrong with a navy Maxwear shirt paired with a white cotton spandex skirt from Jack Nicklaus.

TIDY whites on the greens are always easy on the eyes with Jack Nicklaus' striped mock-neck long-sleeve Jacquard in mercerized cotton paired with black polyester pants and leather belt. Ladies will look cool in a white jacket in cotton spandex worn over a cotton spandex shirt.

Optimal protection

JOJO Silverio takes Vuarnet sunglasses for a spin.

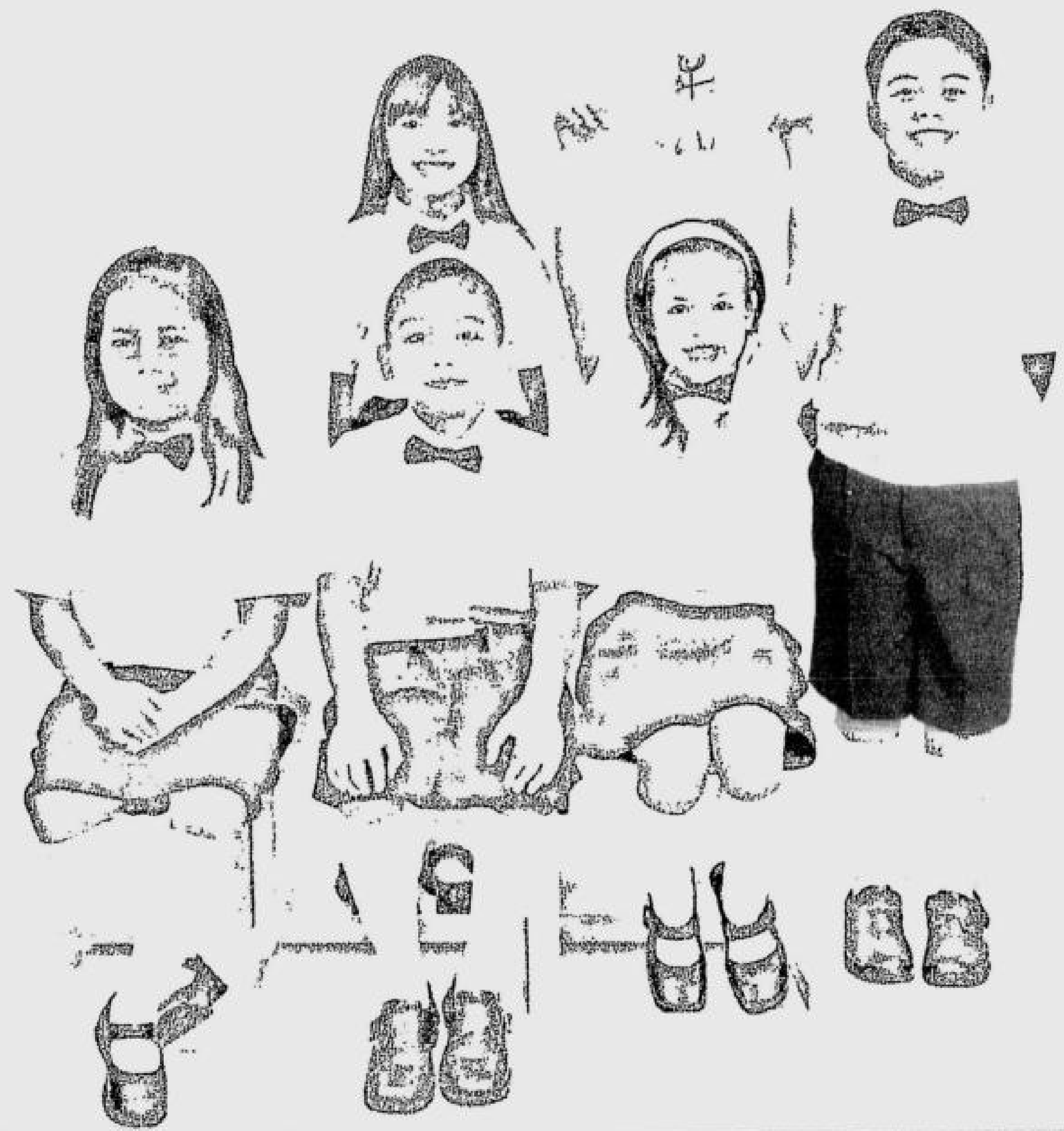
MORE THAN 40 YEARS after Tunisian skier Jean Vuarnet won at the 1960 Winter Olympic games in Squaw Valley, the sunglasses that carry his name is still recognized the world over for constant innovation in the field of sun protection and active partnerships with the world's best athletes.

Available in a variety of styles, and suited for all active situations and conditions, Vuarnet has integrated champions' values into their products: quality, applied technology, comfort, protection and elegance.

Vuarnet sunglasses are products of the perfect balance between unequalled technical specifications of the lenses and the optical ergonomics of the frames.

Vuarnet Sunglasses are available in Sabater Optical, Amanpulo Resort, El Nido Resorts and Shangri-La Mactan. Call 3380008 or www.vuarnet.com.

MONSOUR del Rosario amps his style with Vuarnet sunglasses.



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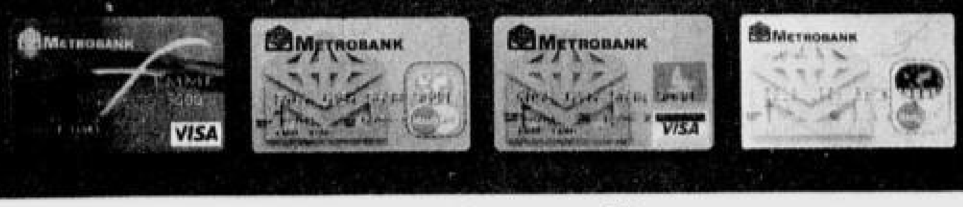

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E RTAINMENT

Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**

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OPEN FOR FRANCHISING

Mondo Manilyn

Now a storyteller on television, the former child star was once a 'horror movie queen' and interviewed as such by film critic Pete Tombs on British TV

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

THE QUESTION CAUGHT MANIlyn Reynes off-guard.

The singer-actress exclaimed: "How did you find out about that?"

She didn't expect that INQUIRER Entertainment would know that she had been interviewed by British film critic Pete Tombs for the documentary "Mondo Macabro," based on his book of the same title.

Tombs himself had informed INQUIRER Entertainment via e-mail last year: "The documentary was commissioned by Channel 4 in the United Kingdom. As part of my research for that program, I visited the Philippines and interviewed [directors] Eddie Romero, Peque Gallaga, Lore Reyes, Don Escudero and [actress] Manilyn Reynes in 2001."

He already "had some knowledge of Philippine history and culture" but, he said, learned more from his interviews than "from reading any number of books."

The segment on the Philippines was entitled "Thrillers from Manila."

"Tito Peque recommended me to Pete Tombs," Manilyn recalled. "At first, I was hesitant, but Tito Peque insisted. He told me I was his favorite—all of his 'Shake, Rattle and Roll' films included me in the cast."

Intelligent, fun

Indeed, Manilyn had starred in five of the eight "Shake" movies—including the latest, the "LRT" episode of Part 8, which was shown last Christmas.

"The interview went well," Manilyn recounted. "Pete asked me about acting—how and where I got my emotions and how I tackled each scene."

Manilyn remembered telling Tombs that really "was just a matter of knowing the scene well and preparing for it."

In a recent e-mail to the INQUIRER, Tombs related that he had found Manilyn "very charming and patient. She put me immediately at ease."

They had a "pleasant lunch and she explained a lot of stuff about local cuisine," Tombs looked back. "Manilyn was highly intelligent and great fun. I remember both her and the interview very warmly."

The actress pointed

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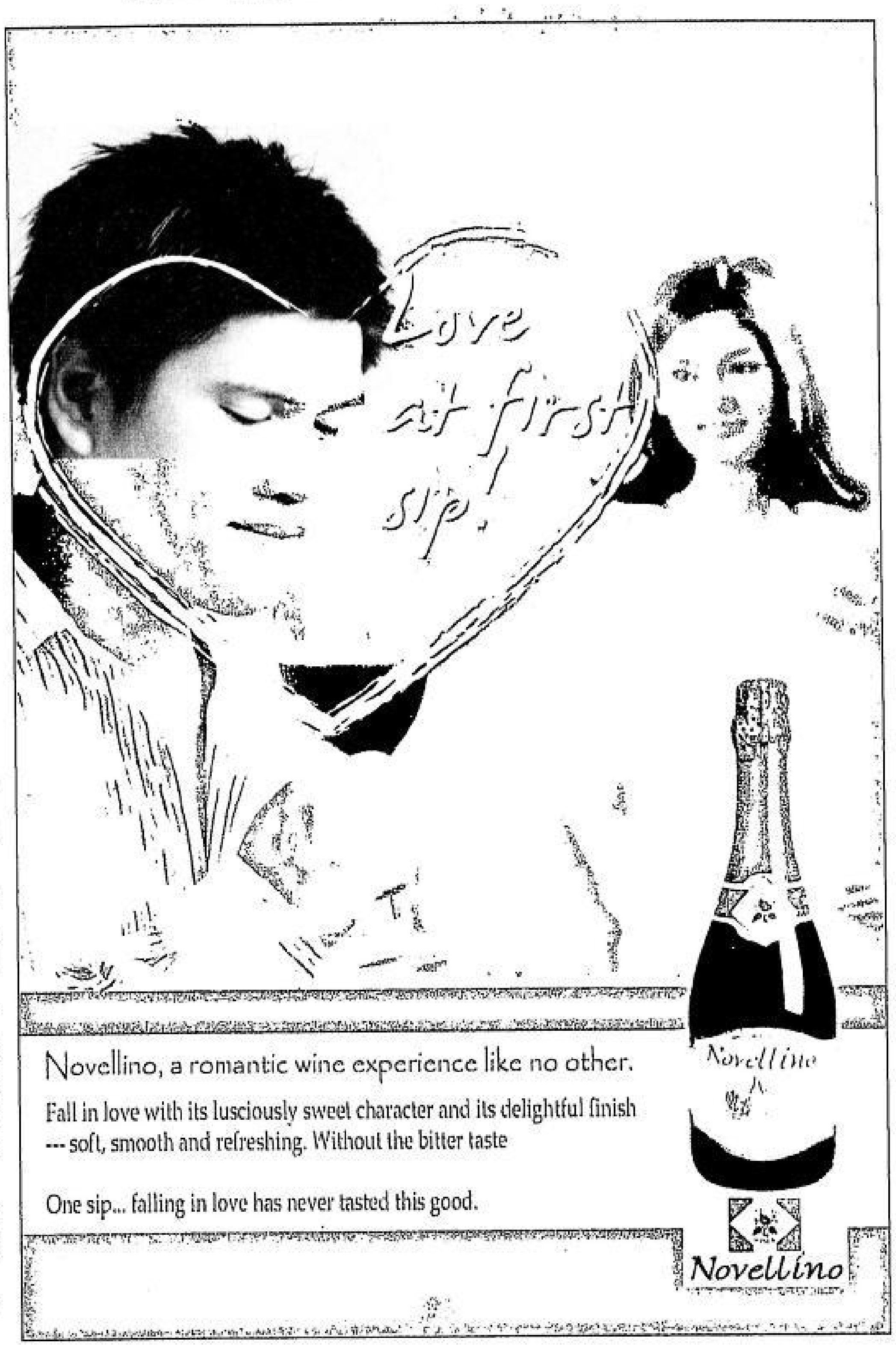

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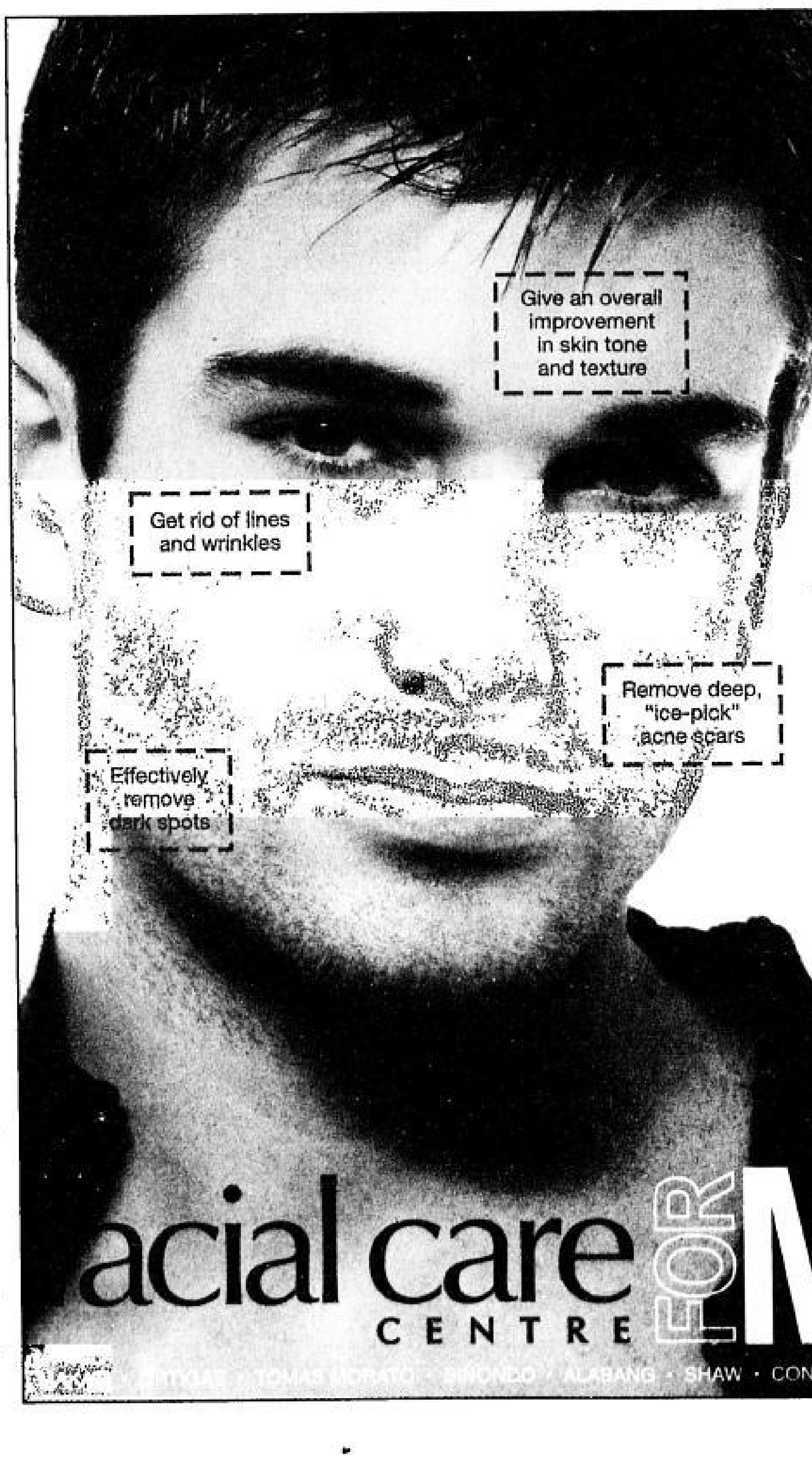
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Permanently retouch those skin flaws with

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GALLERIA

Ticket Price THX: P161 131 Indie Sine: 101 632-9116

1 SPIDER-MAN 3 • THX
1:15 4:05 6:55 9:45

2 SPIDER-MAN 3
10:40 1:30 4:20 7:10 10:000

3 WHISPER
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

4 SHREK 3
2:50 5:00 7:10 9:20

5 SHREK 3
3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

6 FRACTURE
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

7 LUCKY YOU
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

8 indieSine: SANDALANG BAHAY
1:10 3:00 4:50 6:40 8:30

9 28 WEEKS LATER
1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

10 THE CONDEMNED
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

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MARK GARY'S

SANDALANG BAHAY

Albert Martinez Ronnie Lazaro
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1 SHREK 3 10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

2 LUCKY YOU 12:30 2:50 5:10
THE CONDEMNED 7:25 10:00

3 WHISPER
10:30 12:50 3:10 5:30 7:50 10:00

4 28 WEEKS LATER
10:25 12:40 2:55 5:10 7:30 10:00

5 SPIDER-MAN 3
11:00 1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00

6 SHREK 3
12:05 2:25 4:45 7:05 9:25

7 FRACTURE
10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00

METRO EAST

Ticket Price P100 / P110 682-8193 · 682-8199

1 WHISPER
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

2 SHREK 3
1:00 3:30 6:00 8:30

3 SHREK 3
11:00 1:30 4:00 6:30 9:00

4 28 WEEKS LATER
12:05 2:15 4:25 6:40 9:00

5 FRACTURE
1:05 3:45 6:25 9:05

6 THE CONDEMNED
11:20 1:45 4:15 6:45 9:10

7 SPIDER-MAN 3
11:00 1:35 4:10 6:45 9:20

8 LUCKY YOU
12:45 3:30 6:15 9:00

NOVALICHES

Ticket Price: P91 935-3231 / 935-3229-30

1 SHREK 3
2 SHREK 3
3 WHISPER
4 THE CONDEMNED
5 SPIDER-MAN 3
6 SPIDER-MAN 3

PIONEER

Ticket Price: P100 687-5378

1 SHREK 3
2:00 4:10 6:20 8:30

2 SPIDER-MAN 3
12:50 3:30 6:10 8:50

3 FRACTURE
12:50 3:20 5:50 8:20

4 WHISPER
1:10 3:35 6:00 8:25

STA. ROSA

Ticket Price: P80 (049) 837-0907

1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 GRAY MATTERS
3 PERFECT STRANGER
4 WHISPER
5 SHREK 3

LIPA

Ticket Price: P 90 (043) 757-3664 (043) 312-5870

1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SHREK
3 PERFECT STRANGER
4 SHOOTER
5 THE REAPING

DASMARIÑAS

Ticket Price: P80 (046) 416-4332

1 GRAY MATTERS
2 SHREK 3
3 PERFECT STRANGER
4 SPIDER-MAN 3
5 WHISPER

ANGELES

Ticket Price: P 90 (045) 892-2348

1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SHREK 2
3 WHISPER
4 FIREHOUSE DOG

IMUS

Ticket Price: P100 (046) 875-3838 (046) 471-8188

1 PREMONITION
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 28 WEEKS LATER
4 SHREK 3
5 PERFECT STRANGER
6 WHISPER

STARMILLS

Ticket Price: P80 (045) 875-1927

1 FIREHOUSE DOG
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SHREK 3
4 WHISPER
5 PAN'S LABYRINTH
6 PERFECT STRANGER

BACOLOD

Ticket Price: P70 (034) 441-0459

1 SHREK 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 RESERVE
4 PERFECT STRANGER
5 GRAY MATTERS
6 TURISTAS

ILOILO

Ticket Price: P70.50 (033) 336-8070

1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SHREK 3
3 TURISTAS
4 PAN'S LABYRINTH
5 THE REAPING
6 PERFECT STRANGER

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MOVIE GUIDE

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1 SHREK 3
2 SHREK 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 WHISPER

PREMIERE

SHREK 3

Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati

Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216

1 SHREK THE THIRD
2 SHREK THE THIRD
3 SPIDER-MAN-3
4 FRACTURE

starmall EDSA-SHAW

(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150

3 FRACTURE
4 SPIDER-MAN-3
5 RESERVED

metropolis star cinema

www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504285, 5433894

1 CONDEMNED
2 SPIDER-MAN-3
3 28 WEEKS LATER
4 ZOMBIES

THEATRES

1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 SHOOTER
3 THE HILLS HAVE EYES

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC

Pacific Mall Lucena Tel (042) 660-5271

1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 SHREK THE THIRD
3 RESRVED
4 RESRVED

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA

(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 SPIDER-MAN-3
3 28 WEEKS LATER
4 SHREK THE THIRD
5 FRACTURE
6 SPIDER-MAN-3
7 WHISPER
8 SHREK THE THIRD
9 SHREK THE THIRD
10 CONDEMNED / LUCKY YOU

Blue Wave MARIKINA

Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sta. Nino, Marikina City tel. 9241927

1 (DOLBY) SHREK THE THIRD
2 (DOLBY) SPIDER-MAN-3
3 (DOLBY) SHREK THE THIRD
4 (DOLBY) RESERVED

SUPER CINERAMA

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 7334228

1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 28 WEEKS LATER
3 SHREK THE THIRD
4 FRACTURE
5 SATANICA

MARKETPLACE

Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1 THE SHOOTER
2 SPIDER-MAN-3
3 THE HILLS HAVE EYES
4 FIREHOUSE DOG

Masagana CINEMA

(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274

1 SHREK THE THIRD
2 SPIDER-MAN-3
3 CONDEMNED

Center Mall Cinema

Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)

1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 THE HILLS HAVE EYES

Jade Cinema

(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 SHREK THE THIRD
2 SPIDER-MAN-3
3 WHISPER
4 PAN'S LABYRINTH

Centre Plaza Cinema

(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 TURISTAS

EASTWOOD CINEMAS

(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6963 or 72

1 SHREK THE THIRD
2 SPIDER-MAN-3
3 SHREK THE THIRD
4 FRACTURE / SPIDER-MAN-3

CINEMA 2000

Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart

(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1 PERFECT STRANGER
2 SHREK THE THIRD
3 SPIDER-MAN-3
4

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall

(Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146

1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix

(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 ROCKY BALBOA
3 SHOOTER

Cinema 2000 Metrotown

(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

1 SHOOTER
2 SUNSHIE
3 SPIDER-MAN-3
4 THE REAPING

Cinema 2000 Waltermart

(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320

1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 SHREK THE THIRD
3 SHREK THE THIRD

Cinema 2000 Waltermart

(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736

1 SHOOTER
2 SPIDER-MAN-3

Lianas Cinema

(Pasig) tel 640.4748

1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 ZOMBIES

Lianas Cinema

(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 KATAS
3 SEX DRIVE
4 ZOMBIES

Lianas MovieCity

(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 RUMBLE BOYS
3 SHREK THE THIRD
4 RAMPADORA
5 THE CHANTING

Fiesta World Mall

(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1 THE SHOOTER
2 SHREK THE THIRD
3 THE REAPING
4 SPIDER-MAN-3

Berma Cinema

(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 SEX EDUCATION

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1 **SPIDER-MAN 3**
1:30, 4:40, 7:50, 11:00
G

2 **SHREK 3**
12:40, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50
G

3 **SHREK 3**
1:00, 3:20, 5:40, 8:00, 10:20
G

4 **FRACTURE**
12:00, 2:40, 5:20, 8:00, 10:40
PG 13

MTRCB RATING ▶ R-13 STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND ABOVE.

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CINEMA 1 **FRACTURE**
11:45, 2:25, 5:05
7:45, 10:25

CINEMA 2 **WHISPER**
11:00, 1:20, 3:40
6:00, 8:20, 10:35
R-13

DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND EX

PROMENADE GREENHILLS

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NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 3 **SHREK 03**
11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30
GP

CINEMA 4 **SPIDERMAN 03**
11:00, 1:45, 4:35, 7:25, 10:15
GP

CINEMA 5 **SHREK 03**
110:30, 12:30, 2:30, 4:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30
GP

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.

MUSIC MUSEUM

May 18, 2007	CHRISTIAN BAUTISTA	8:00 PM
May 19 & 26, 2007	OGIE ALCASID & SITTI	8:00 PM
June 15 & 16, 2007	Rico J. Puno & Mitch Valdez	8:00 PM

TEATRINO PROMENADE GREENHILLS

EVERY MONDAY	DANCE NIGHT	7:00 PM
May 19, 2007	DAVE ELQUERO in Bossa Breeze w/ MYMP	7:30 PM
May 31, 2007	RJ Jimenez	8:30 PM
May 11, 18, 25, 2007	Drag - Ons	9:00 PM
JUNE 15, 2007	Champion of the World (Jed Madela)	8:30 PM

FOR INQUIRIES PLS. CALL 722-4532 LOC 116

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ADVISORY: Thematic content involving murder of a wife in adulterous relationship and the visual content of the murder may not be suitable for minors below 13.

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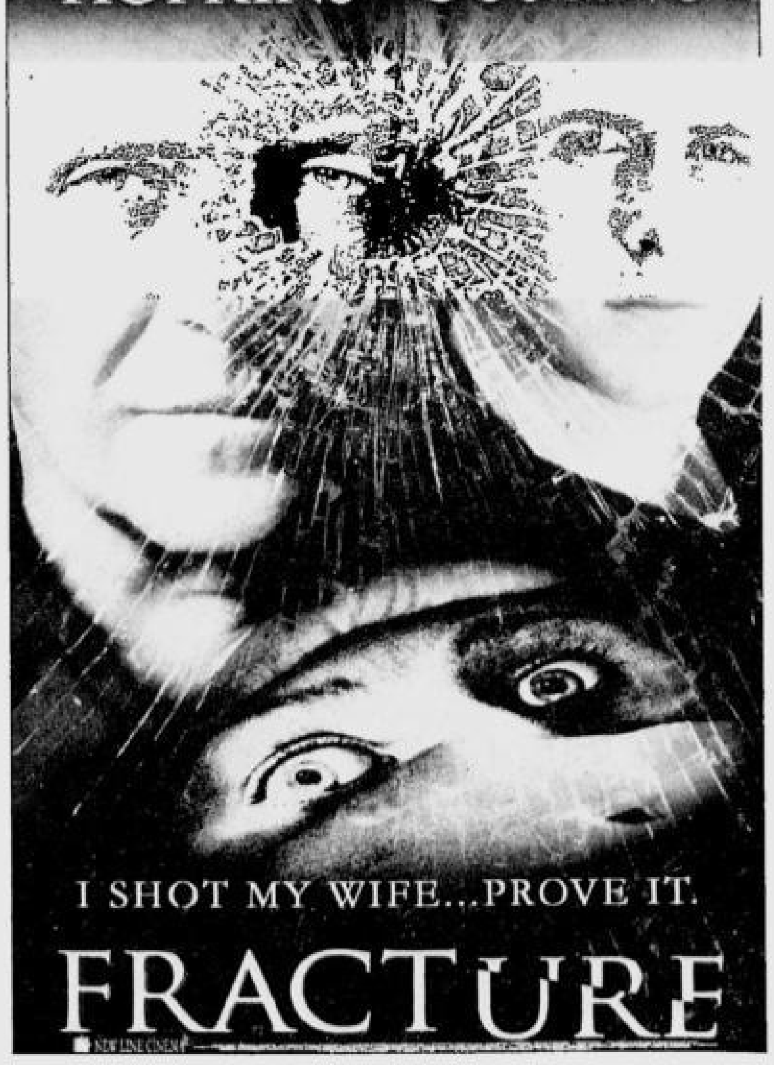
AMERICA's MOST TALKED-ABOUT MOVIE!

HOW DO YOU CONVICT A MAN WHO HAS ALREADY BEEN PROVEN INNOCENT?

ANTHONY HOPKINS RYAN GOSLING



I SHOT MY WIFE...PROVE IT.

FRACTURE

NEW LINE CINEMA

First films of the famous

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

MOST ACTORS LAUNCH THEIR movie careers with bit roles in relatively insignificant films, and have to bide their time before stardom is finally bestowed on them. On the other hand, a few thespically anointed others are introduced in big, yummy, attention-calling roles that make their success as stars pretty much a forgone conclusion.

What was it about them that gave producers and directors such faith in their ability to light up the screen in a stellar way? Some sterling examples may lead to some consistent conclusions:

Warren Beatty came on strong and charismatic in his very first film, "Splendor in the Grass." He was given the movie's young male lead role because he was very handsome, charismatic and talented—that stellar combination presents itself only once every decade, and Hollywood knew that a potentially major player had arrived.

Beatty went on to star in "The Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone" opposite **Vivien Leigh**, "Bonnie and Clyde" with Faye Dunaway, "Shampoo," "Heaven Can Wait," "Bugsy" and other outstanding movies, and he even turned out to be a fine director ("Reds," "Bullworth," etc.).

Marlon Brando made an even more intense screen debut in "The Men," following up quickly with the film version of his stage hit "A Streetcar Named Desire." He was so compelling on the movie screen that he essayed other intense characters in "Viva Sapata!," "Julius Caesar," "The Wild One," "On the Waterfront," etc.

Compelling

BRANDO was such a dynamic, realistic actor that some experts believe that he redefined the thespic craft all by his lonesome. Even in the twilight of his life and career, Brando was compelling in movies like "A Dry White Season" and "Don Juan DeMarco."

On the distaff side, Drew Barrymore was only a tiny kid when she lit up the screen in "Altered States" and "E.T." In fact, in the second movie, she was so cute and competent that she threatened to steal the film from E.T., the extra-terrestrial, himself!

More than 20 years later, Barrymore is less kiddie-cute but still as compelling in her new starrers, like "Charlie's Angels," "50 First Dates" and "Music & Lyrics."

Other stars and their first films: **Halle Berry**, "Jungle Fever." **Sandra Bullock**, "A Fool and His Money." **James Caan**, a bit role in "Irma La Douce" (starring **Shirley MacLaine**). **Nicolas Cage**, "Fast Times at Ridgemont High."

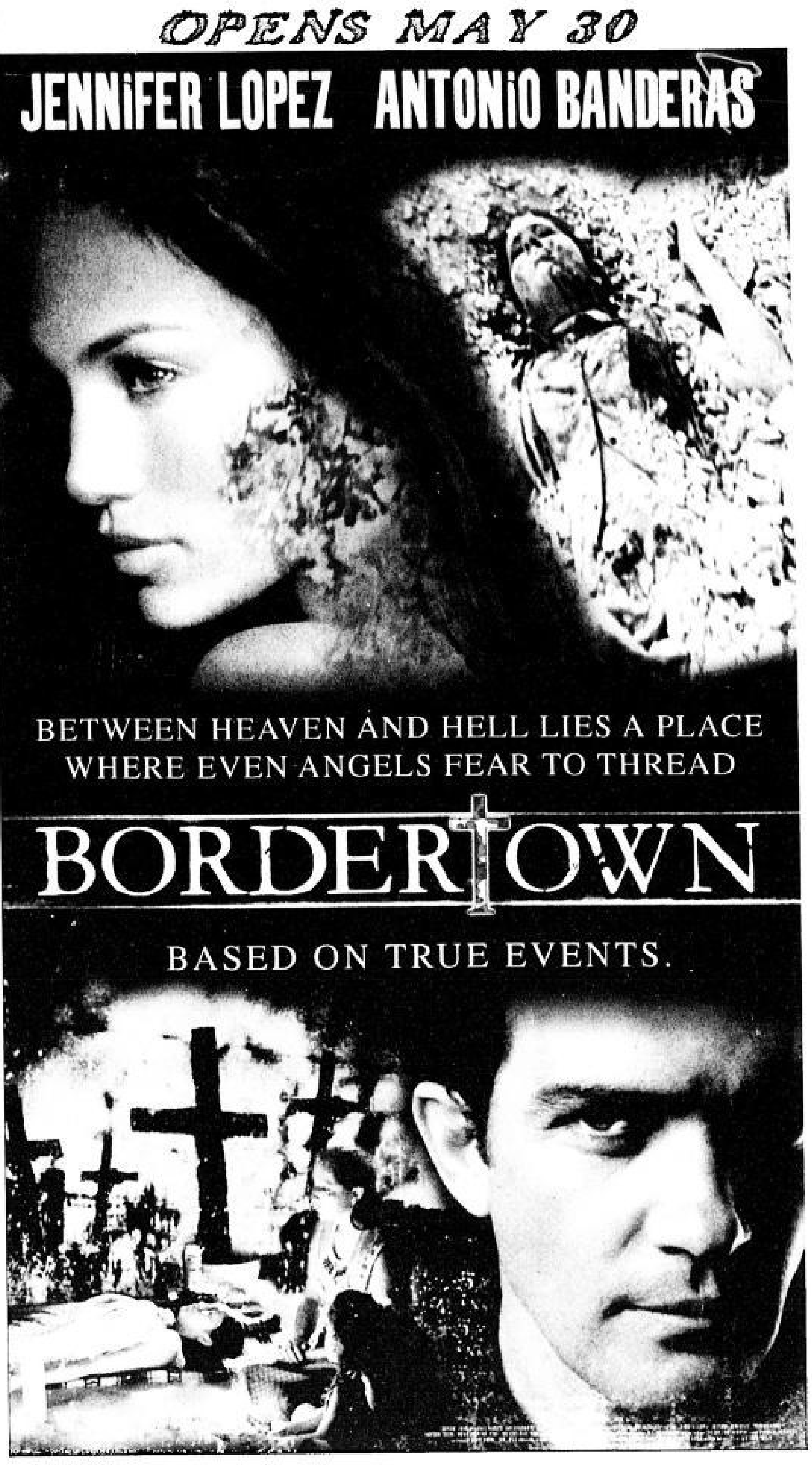
Michael Caine, "Hell in Korea." Only 10 movies later did he finally come into his own with "Alfie." **Jim Carrey**, "Finders Keepers." **Glenn Close**, "The World According to Garp." **Kevin Costner**, "Shadows Run Black"—some 10 movies before "The Untouchables."

Billy Crystal, "Rabbit Test." **Daniel Day-Lewis**, "Sunday, Bloody Sunday." **Robert DeNiro**, "Greetings"—years before he did "Mean Streets." **Johnny Depp**, "A Nightmare on Elm Street."

Finally: We used to be told that **James Dean** acted in only three films before his tragic car crash. It turns out that his first movie wasn't "Rebel Without A Cause," after all, it was a forgotten movie titled "Sailor Beware."

It was followed by "Fixed Bayonets," "Has Anybody Seen My Gal?" and a bit role in "Trouble Along the Way"—before the better-known thespic troika of "Rebel," "East of Eden"

FIRST/ D4



OPENS MAY 30

JENNIFER LOPEZ ANTONIO BANDERAS

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AT THE CINEMAS

THX

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Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification, please call 729 7777

G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 28 WEEKS LATER	2 SHREK 3	3 WHISPER	4 SPIDER-MAN 3
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 SHREK 3	2 SPIDER-MAN 3	3 THX SHREK 3 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 SINEMARS (10:30 am - 12:00 nn) / LUCKY YOU	5 WHISPER	6 SHREK 3	7 FRACTURE
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 SPIDER-MAN 3	2 SHREK 3		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX SHREK 3 GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX SPIDER-MAN 3 GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 FRACTURE GUARANTEED SEATS	4 SHREK 3 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 SHREK 3 GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX SHREK 3 GUARANTEED SEATS	2 SPIDER-MAN 3		
	3 FRACTURE	4 WHISPER	5 SHREK 3	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 SPIDER-MAN 3	2 WHISPER	3 TURISTAS	4 GRAY MATTERS
M2 MARKET! MARKET!	1 SHREK 3	2 FRACTURE		
	3 WHISPER	4 SHREK 3	5 SPIDER-MAN 3	

At the Activity Center

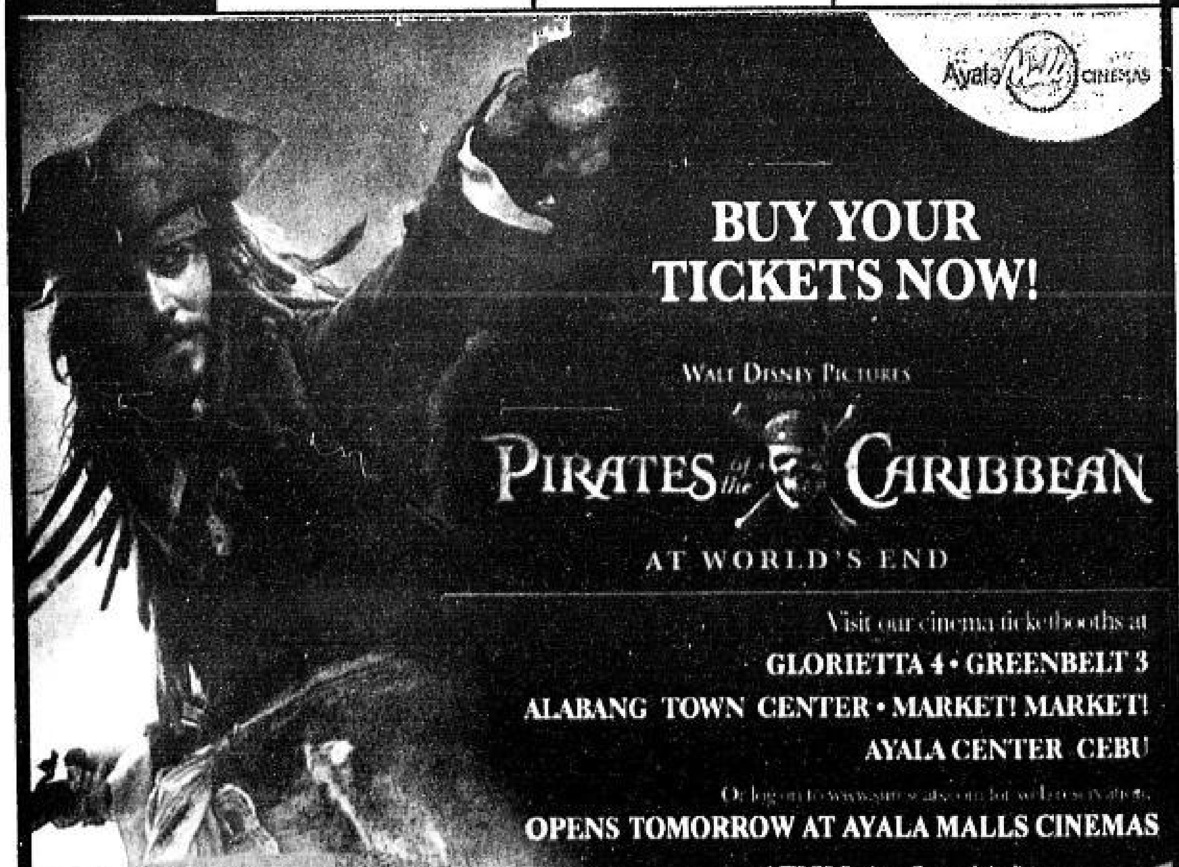
Customer Service text hotline: 0917 6095900
Customer Service Numbers: Glorietta - 752 7272; from 10am to 9pm
Greenbelt - 757 4853; from 11am to 9pm
Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; from 10am to 8pm
Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc 324
Market! Market! - 886 7519

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER
Anson's Exhibit May 15 to 31, 2007	Strawberry Shortcake & Friends: The Big Berry Bake Off May 18 to 20, 2007
AYALA CENTER CEBU	MARKET! MARKET!
Toastmasters Info Booth at Paseos May 18 to 20, 2007	Piyestang Pinoy: Celebrity Recipes Anniversary Party May 16, 2007

GREENBELT — Greenbelt 2 Dinner Theatre presents: Broadway Showstoppers
May 15 & 22, 2007

Greenbelt 1 Onstage — ONSTAGE - The perfect spot for concerts, stage plays & coporate events is now accepting bookings for May to July 2007
For bookings, pls. call 752-7862 or 757-3861

Ayala MUSEUM — CHINESE DIASPORA: Art Streams from the Mainland (six shows)
Ongoing until May 27, 2007
For more info, pls. call 757-7117 to 21 loc. 14 or email museum_inquiry@ayalamuseum.org



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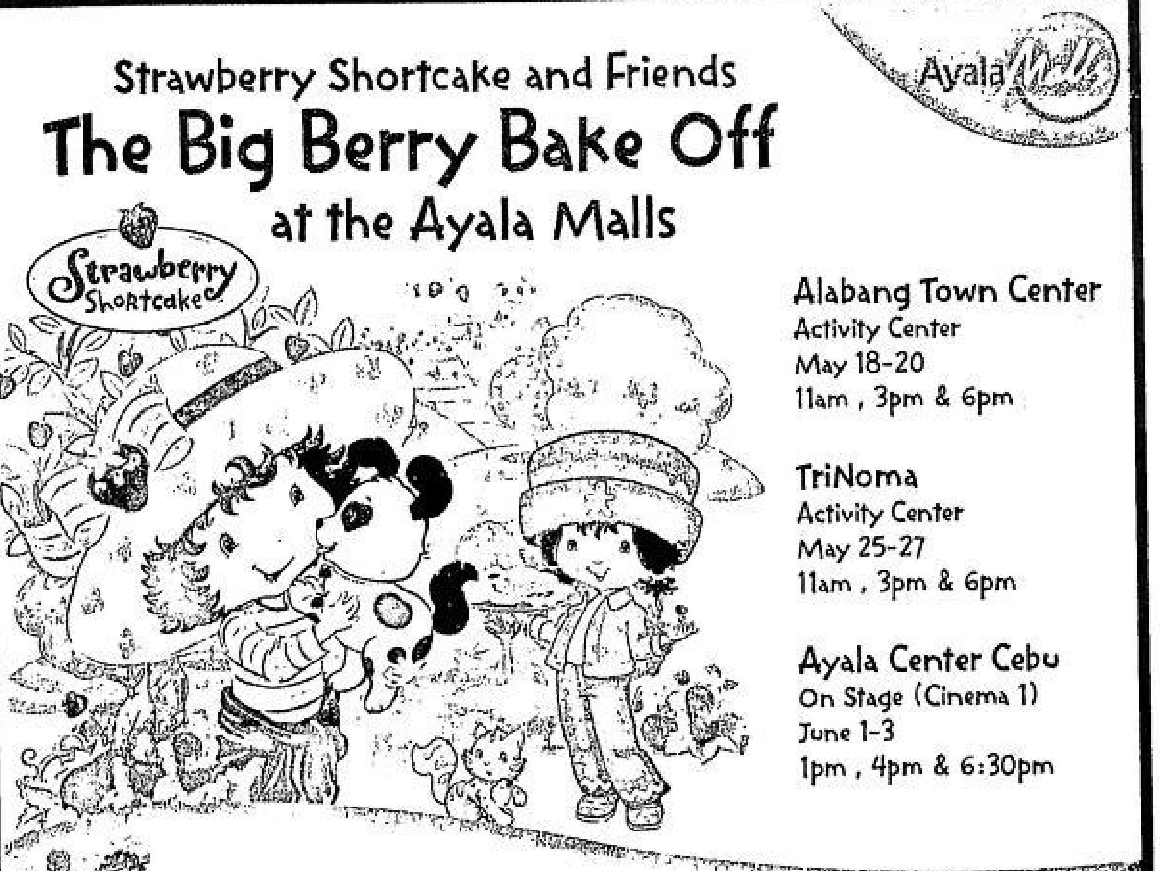
AYALA CENTER CEBU

Or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.

OPENS TOMORROW AT AYALA MALLS CINEMAS

MTRCB Rating: General Audience



Strawberry Shortcake and Friends

The Big Berry Bake Off

at the Ayala Malls

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Activity Center
May 18-20
11am , 3pm & 6pm

TriNoma
Activity Center
May 25-27
11am , 3pm & 6pm

Ayala Center Cebu
On Stage (Cinema 1)
June 1-3
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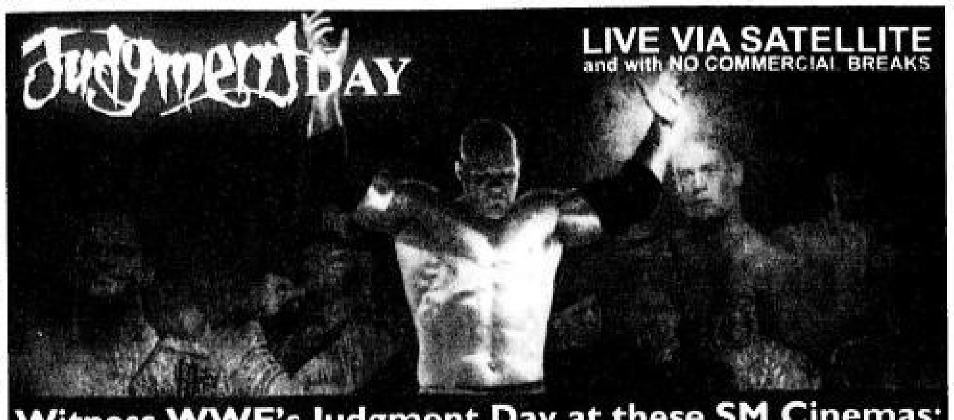

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Cebu, Clark, Davao, Fairview, Mall of Asia, Manila, Megamall, North EDSA, Pampanga, San Lazaro, Southmall, Sta. Mesa

Weekend Screenings: May 25 (Friday) 7:00 p.m. | May 26 (Saturday) • May 27 (Sunday) 11:00 a.m., 2:30 p.m., 6:00 p.m.

Admission Prices: P 150 (Metro Manila) • P 120 (Cebu, Clark, Pampanga) • P 90 (Davao)

With P 20 OFF for students

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SM MALL OF ASIA 556-0242
San Miguel Coca-Cola IMAX
SPIDER-MAN 3
12:30PM 3:30PM 6:30PM 9:30PM
Admission Prices: P 300
(Before 5 p.m., Mon-Thu)
P 350 (After 5 p.m., Mon-Thu; Whole Day, Fri-Sun, Holidays)
T-REX
11:00AM Admission Prices: P 200
1 SHREK 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 SHREK 3/ 28 WEEKS LATER
5 FRACTURE
6 WHISPER
PREMIERE CINEMA
SHREK 3
CENTERSTAGE
SPIDER-MAN 3
THE PODIUM
CINEMA 1
SHREK 3
CINEMA 2
SPIDER-MAN 3
633-8976

SM NORTH EDSA 929-5452
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 SHREK 3
5 FRACTURE
6 WHISPER
7 SPIDER-MAN 3
8 SHREK 3
9 28 WEEKS LATER
10 CONDEMNED
11 SHREK 3
12 SPIDER-MAN 3

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901
1 WHISPER
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 SHREK 3
5 28 WEEKS LATER
6 FRACTURE
7 LUCKY YOU
8 CONDEMNED
9 SPIDER-MAN 3
10 SHREK 3
11 SPIDER-MAN 3
12 THE SHOOTER

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749
1 FRACTURE
2 28 WEEKS LATER
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 SPIDER-MAN 3
5 SHREK 3
6 CONDEMNED
7 SHREK 3
8 WHISPER
9 SPIDER-MAN 3
10 SPIDER-MAN 3
11 ANG CUTE NG INA MO
12 LUCKY YOU

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 FRACTURE
3 SHREK 3
4 SHREK 3
5 SPIDER-MAN 3
6 ANG CUTE NG INA MO
7 28 WEEKS LATER
8 LUCKY YOU
9 WHISPER
10 CONDEMNED

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 FRACTURE
4 CONDEMNED/ SHREK 3
5 WHISPER
6 SHREK 3

SM SOUTHMALL 806-6888
1 SHREK 3
2 WHISPER
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 SHREK 3
5 SPIDER-MAN 3
6 28 WEEKS LATER
7 CONDEMNED
8 FRACTURE
9 ANG CUTE NG INA MO

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SHREK 3
3 WHISPER
4 SPIDER-MAN 3

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240
1 SHREK 3
2 WHISPER
3 FRACTURE
4 SPIDER-MAN 3
5 SHREK 3
6 SPIDER-MAN 3
7 SPIDER-MAN 3
8 SPIDER-MAN 3
9 SPIDER-MAN 3
10 CONDEMNED
11 28 WEEKS LATER
12 LUCKY YOU

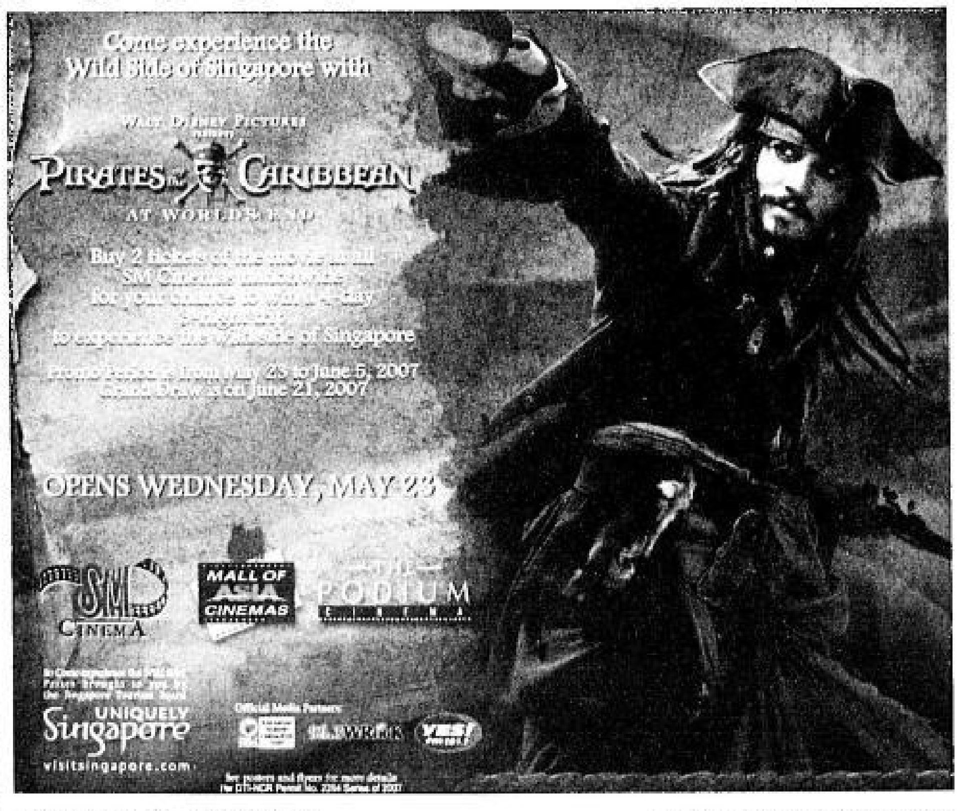
SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4323201-04
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 WHISPER
3 PERFECT STRANGER
4 SHREK 3

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917
1 SHREK 3
2 28 WEEKS LATER
3 WHISPER
4 SPIDER-MAN 3

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975
1 SPIDER-MAN 3/ SHREK 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 WHISPER

movietime PROMO

Watch and Win at SM Cinema



LUZON

SM CITY BACOOR (046)417-3868
1 CONDEMNED
2 WHISPER
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 SHREK 3
5 SHREK 3
6 SPIDER-MAN 3
7 FRACTURE
8 28 WEEKS LATER

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45
1 THE SHOOTER
2 SHREK 3
3 PERFECT STRANGER
4 WHISPER
5 SPIDER-MAN 3
6 FIREHOUSE DOG

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17
1 SHREK 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 WHISPER

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04
1 PERFECT STRANGER
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 THE REAPING
4 SHREK 3

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637681-85
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 PAN'S LABYRINTH
3 FIREHOUSE DOG
4 PERFECT STRANGER
5 WHISPER
6 SHREK 3

SM CIY LIPA (043) 784-0187
1 THE REAPING
2 SHREK 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 THE SHOOTER

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SUNSHINE
3 THE LAST MIMZY
4 SHREK 3

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 WHISPER
3 SUNSHINE
4 SPIDER-MAN 3

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160
1 SHREK 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 CONDEMNED

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5349811
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 WHISPER
3 SHREK 3
4 SPIDER-MAN 3

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 PERFECT STRANGER
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 ROCKY BALBOA
5 WHISPER
6 SHREK 3

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884
1 SHREK 3
2 THE SHOOTER
3 SUNSHINE
4 SPIDER-MAN 3

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422
1 TURISTAS
2 SHREK 3
3 SHREK 3
4 SPIDER-MAN 3
5 SPIDER-MAN 3
6 THE REAPING
7 PAN'S LABYRINTH
8 PERFECT STRANGER

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SHREK 3
3 SHREK 3
4 PERFECT STRANGER
5 WHISPER
6 PREMONITION/ TURISTAS
7 SHREK 3
8 SPIDER-MAN 3

SM CITY BACOLOD (034) 708 1010
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SHREK 3
3 THE SHOOTER
4 PERFECT STRANGER

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

*FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA

THE TV storyteller reads to children at the INQUIRER. RODEL ROTONI

POWER PLANT CINEMA
ROCKWELL CENTER, MAKATI TEL: 898-1440/41
DOLBY DIGITAL

FRACTURE 12:50,3:15,5:40, 8:05,10:30	SHREK 3 G 2:00,4:05,6:10,8:15	SHREK 3 G 1:20,3:25,5:30, 7:35,9:40
SHREK 3 G 12:40,2:45,4:50, 6:55,9:00	WHISPER R13 1:40,3:50,6:00,8:10	SPIDER-MAN 3 G 1:20,4:20,7:20,10:20

MOVIES & SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

No. 1 Indonesian HIT MOVIE of the Year!
OPENS on MAY 23
MTRCB RATING ▶ R13 Strictly for 13 years of age and above

SURGA
HEAVEN
Get a chance to win a trip for 2 to INDONESIA! (Meet & Greet the stars in Jakarta)
AD GROUP
SM
informatics
AVLS

SCHEDULE of EVENTS
RED CARPET PREMIERE (May 21 SM Megamall Cinema 4 (7PM)
MALL TOUR - (featuring 4whealdrive Band)
May 18 SM Manila • May 19 SM Valenzuela • May 20 SM North EDSA
BAR TOUR
Cowboy Grill - May 17, 18 and 20 Mugen Bar, Metrowalk - May 19

SHANG CINEPLEX

① SHREK 3 MTRCB GP 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 10:00
③ SPIDER-MAN 3 MTRCB GP 1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:15
② SHREK 3 MTRCB GP 12:20, 2:30 4:40, 6:50, 9:00
④ WHISPER MTRCB R-13 2:30, 4:50, 7:10, 9:30
PREMIERE THEATRE SHREK 3 (GP) 1:50, 4:00, 6:10, 8:30

Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice

Catch the Cineplex Special

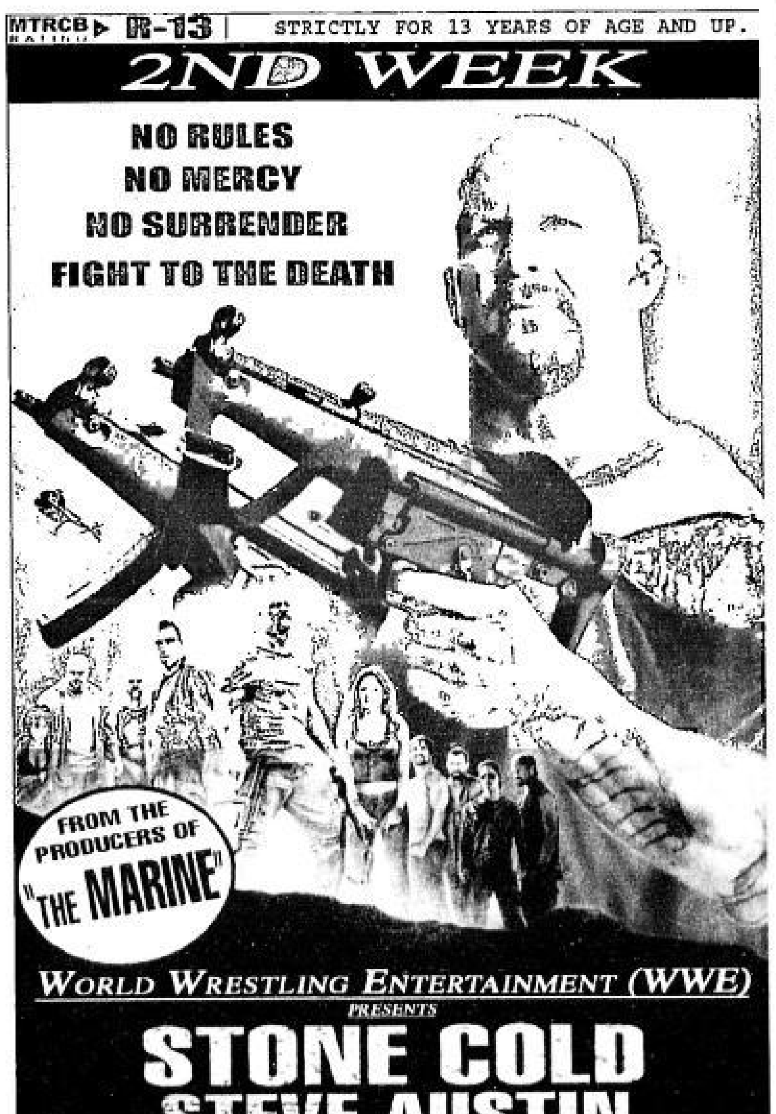
"PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 3 (AT WORLD'S END)"
TICKETS NOW AVAILABLE!!!
Showing on May 23, 2007 (Wednesday).
Call 633-2227 for more details

6th floor, Shangri-La Plaza Mall
EDSA corner Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City
Call 633-7851, loc. 171/ 170 or 633-2227
for more details.

Shangri-La Plaza

MTRCB RATING ▶ R-13 | STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND UP.

2ND WEEK



WORLD WRESTLING ENTERTAINMENT (WWE)
PRESENTS
STONE COLD STEVE AUSTIN
THE CONDEMNED

Mondo Manilyn

From page D1

out to Tombs that there were different degrees of onscreen fear. "It's hard to act scared if you don't know where the fear is coming from."

She said that working with Peque and company honed her skills. "Tito Peque is systematic. Before shooting, he would tell me whether the shot was a close-up or over-the-shoulder. If it was a close-up, then I'd act with my eyes. If only my shoulders could be seen, then it would require body acting," she pointed out.

She said she had enjoyed working on all her "Shake" movies and that the first one, "Aswang" from 1990's "Shake 2," was an all-time favorite.

"That was where I met my [future] husband Aljon Jimenez," she enthused. "I was really shaken, rattled and rolled!" They now have two children Kyle, 10, and Kirk, 4.

"My eldest will be in Grade 6 this coming school year," she quipped.

In spite of her hectic schedule, juggling two Kapuso shows (GMA 7's "Mga Kuwento ni Lola Basyang" and QTV's "Moms"), she finds time for her family. (She also has a 25th anniversary album in the works and two concerts at Casino Filipino Angeles and Tagaytay on May 20 and 22.)

"Since it's summer vacation, my husband and kids usually take me to and fetch me from work," she said. "We have a lot of bonding time together."

Reading to kids

Her job enriches her family life, she related. "I learn a lot from these shows. I get to share the stories from 'Basyang' with my kids. From 'Moms,' I pick up a lot of tips from our guests on disciplining and dealing with difficult questions. For example, my eldest now asks me about the birds and the bees."

Mama Manilyn stressed that "a child's education should start at home. It's best for him to learn the facts of life from his parents and not from people who may give him wrong information."

She also reads to her kids—just like her "Basyang" character.

Manilyn played storyteller to children, ages 7 to 13, at the first INQUIRER Read Along last May 5.

She explained that she would like to encourage children, and their parents, to read more. "Computers and the Internet are helpful tools," she said, "but nothing beats the experience of reading."

Sam, Anne keep mum …

From page D6

gin?" Heartbeats are louder than all the PR drumbeaters combined.

Teleradyo

The new face of radio has begun. People can not only hear their favorite radio personalities on DZMM Radyo Patrol Sais Trenta, but they can now see their faces on TV via DZMM TeleRadyo on Channel 22 (SkyCable).

Catch Ariel Ureta and Winnie Cordero in "TodoTodo Walang Preno" (10:30 a.m., weekdays), Julius Babao and Tintin Bersola in "Magandang Morning with Julius and Tintin" (6 a.m., weekends) and other radio commentators.

They are out to dispel the fallacy that some jocks are better heard than seen.

Top 3

The top 3 finalists of Ms Ugly (No More) have been chosen. The lucky girls are Luisa Ramos, Lourdes Victorioso and Jeralyn Escorel. They will undergo free surgical aesthetic makeovers courtesy of Beverly Hills 6750 Cosmetic Surgery & Skin Institute. At the end of the procedures, they will be presented in an unveiling ceremony where the public will again field in their text votes to determine the grand winner. Goodbye to days of being uhm … "pretty ugly."

TFC show

Catch Donita Rose in a travel magazine show, "Boracay '007" (Moguls Productions). The many facets of the island will be shown as Donita, along with Tracy Abad, Joey Agustin and Koy Rivera, cruise the Bora skyline with a helicopter and then aboard a 70-feet yacht. Part I will be aired on May 27 on TFC at 11 a.m. in North America and Asia Pacific.

E-mail wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com

First . . .

From page D3

and "Giant." So, there.

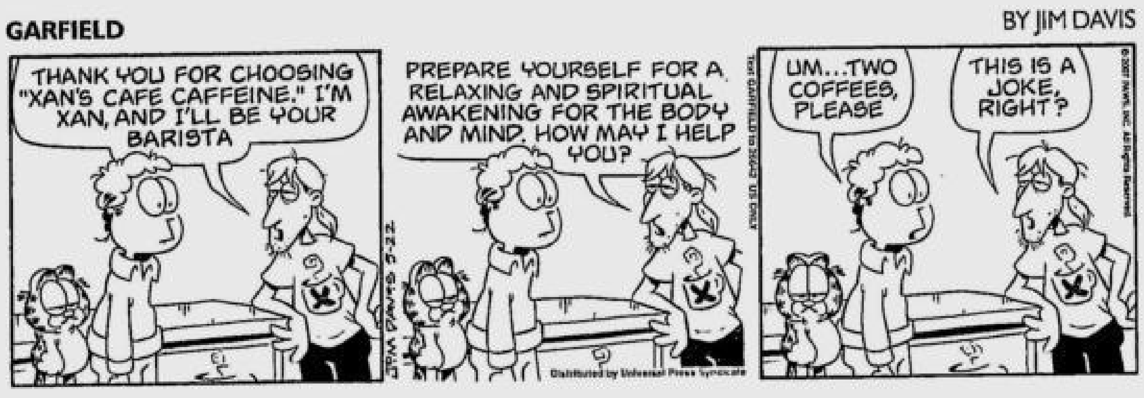
'Idol' albums

KATHARINE McPhee's self-titled debut album exploded on the Billboard 200, selling 115,000 copies and placing only behind Norah Jones.

Chris Daughtry's band released its own debut album, the kick-off single of which, "It's Not Over," is doing well on radio, video and digital domains.

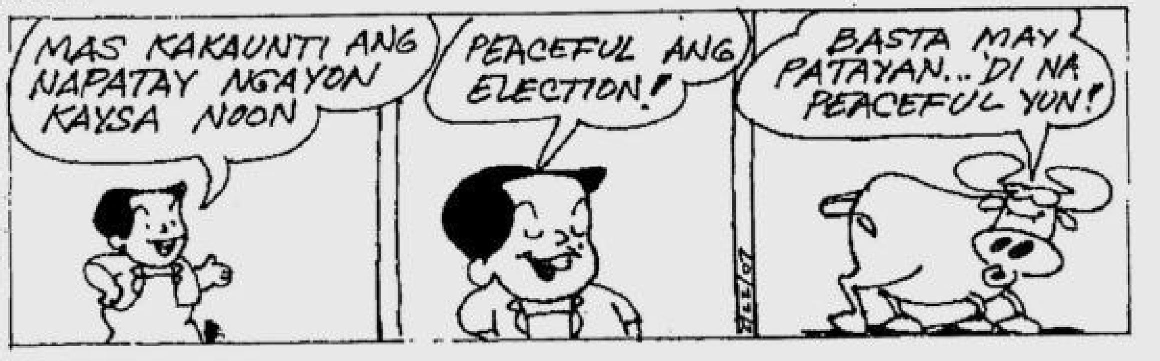
GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS


THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING "XAN'S CAFE CAFFEINE." I'M XAN, AND I'LL BE YOUR BARISTA
PREPARE YOURSELF FOR A RELAXING AND SPIRITUAL AWAKENING FOR THE BODY AND MIND. HOW MAY I HELP YOU?
UM...TWO COFFEES, PLEASE
THIS IS A JOKE, RIGHT?
JIM DAVIS 5-22
Distributed by Universal Press Syndicate

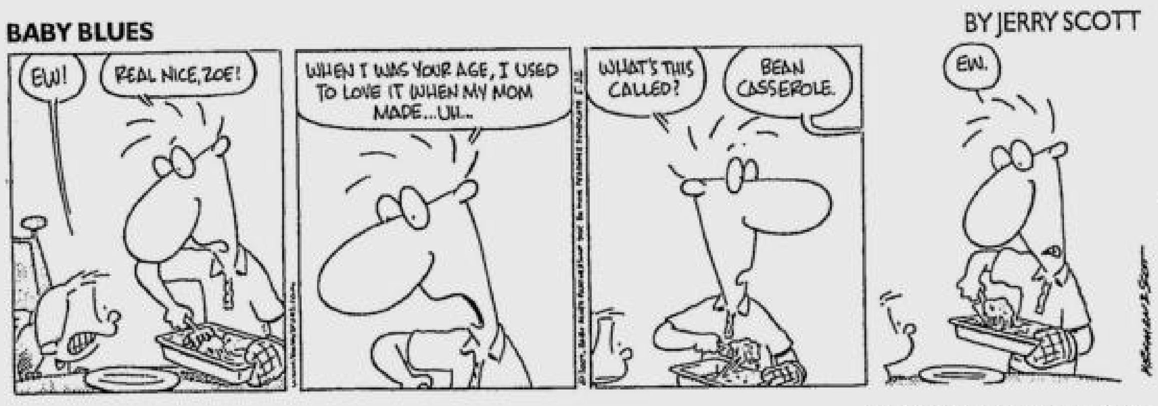
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


MAS KAKAUNTI ANG NAPATAY NGAYON KAYSA NOON
PEACEFUL ANG ELECTION!
BASTA MAY PATAYAN...'DI NA PEACEFUL YUN!

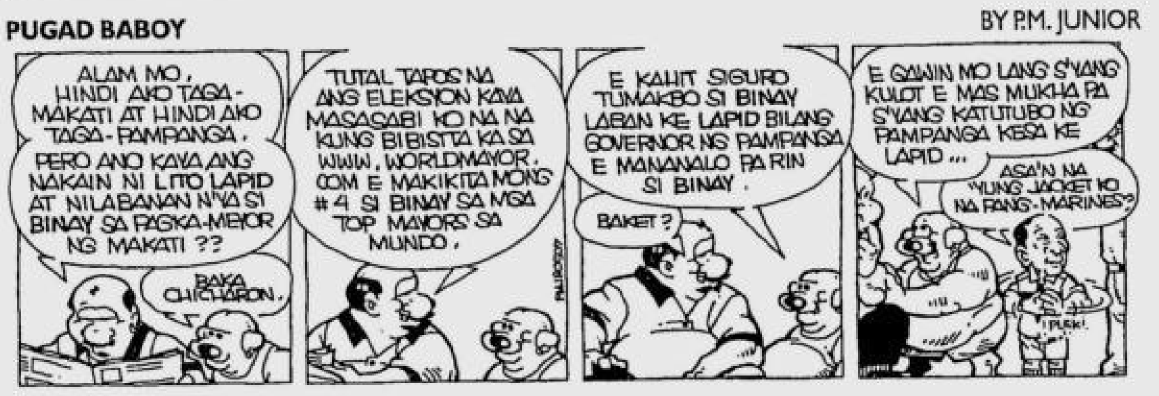
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


EW!
REAL NICE, ZOE!
WHEN I WAS YOUR AGE, I USED TO LOVE IT WHEN MY MOM MADE...UH...
WHAT'S THIS CALLED?
BEAN CASSEROLE.
EW.

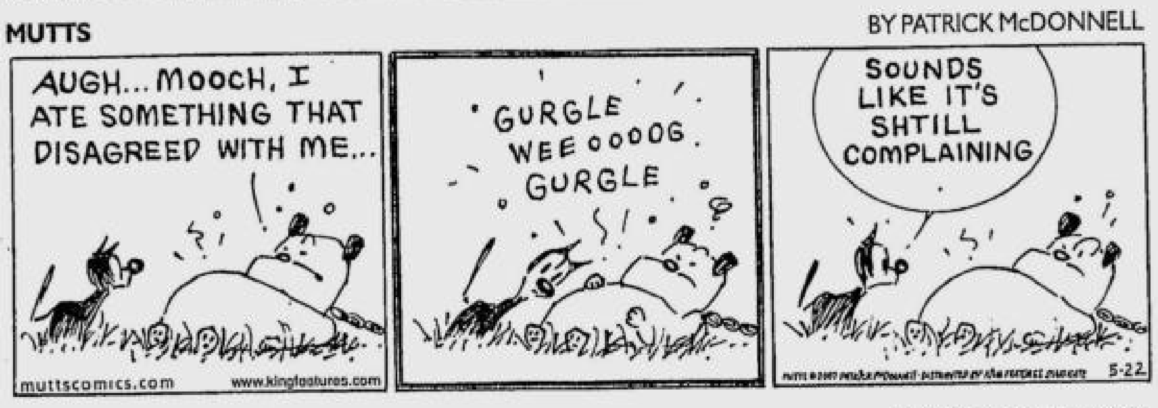
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


ALAM MO, HINDI AKO TAGA-MAKATI AT HINDI AKO TAGA-PAMPANGA.
PERO ANO KAYA ANG NAKAIN NI LITO LAPID AT NILABANAN N'YA SI BINAY SA PAGKA-MEYOR NG MAKATI ??
BAKA CHICHARON.
TUTAL TAPOS NA ANG ELEKSYON KAYA MASASABI KO NA NA KUNG BIBISITA KA SA WWW.WORLDMAYOR.COM E MAKIKITA MONG #4 SI BINAY SA MGA TOP MAYORS SA MUNDO.
E KAHIT SIGURO TUMAKBO SI BINAY LABAN KE LAPID BILANG GOVERNOR NG PAMPANGA E MANANALO PA RIN SI BINAY.
BAKET?
E GAWIN MO LANG S'YANG KULOT E MAS MUKHA PA S'YANG KATUTUBO NG PAMPANGA KESA KE LAPID...
ASA'N NA 'YUNG JACKET KO NA PANG-MARINES?
PUSK!

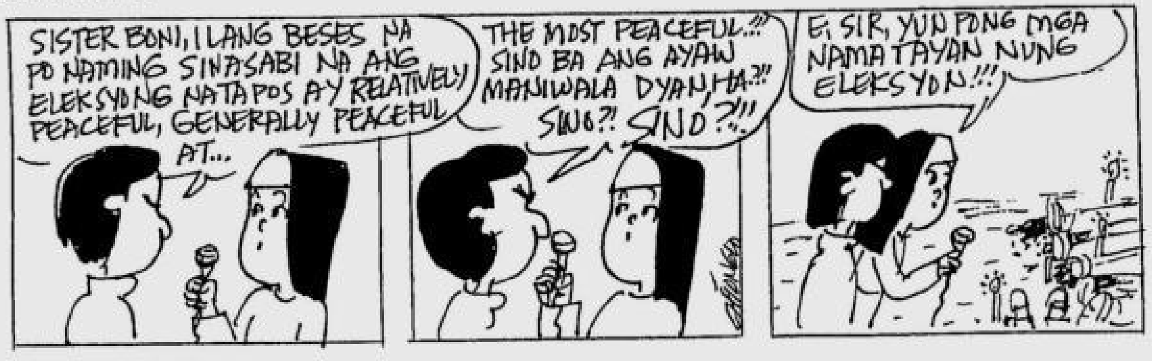
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


AUGH... MOOCH, I ATE SOMETHING THAT DISAGREED WITH ME...
GURGLE WEE OOOOG GURGLE
SOUNDS LIKE IT'S SHTILL COMPLAINING
5-22
muttscomics.com
www.kingfeatures.com

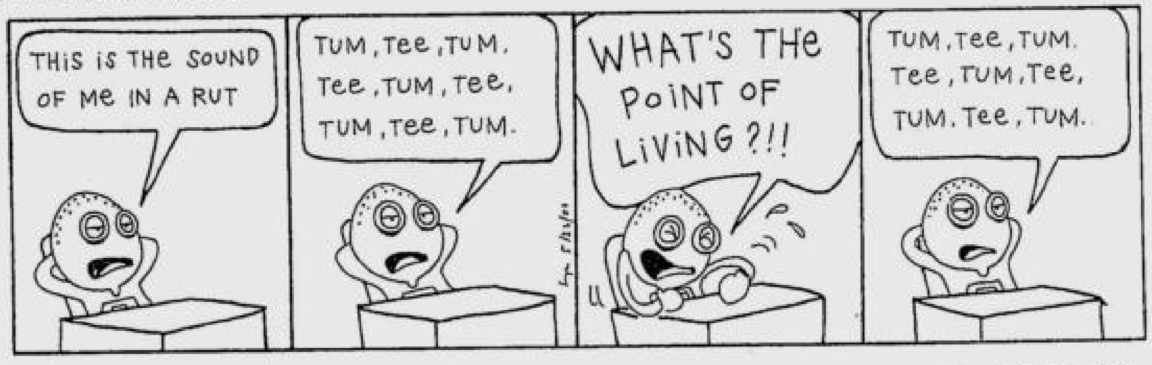
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


SISTER BONI, ILANG BESES NA PO NAMING SINASABI NA ANG ELEKSYONG NATAPOS AY RELATIVELY PEACEFUL, GENERALLY PEACEFUL AT...
THE MOST PEACEFUL..!! SINO BA ANG AYAW MANIWALA DYAN, HA?!! SINO?! SINO?!!
E, SIR, YUN PONG MGA NAMATAYAN NUNG ELEKSYON..!!!

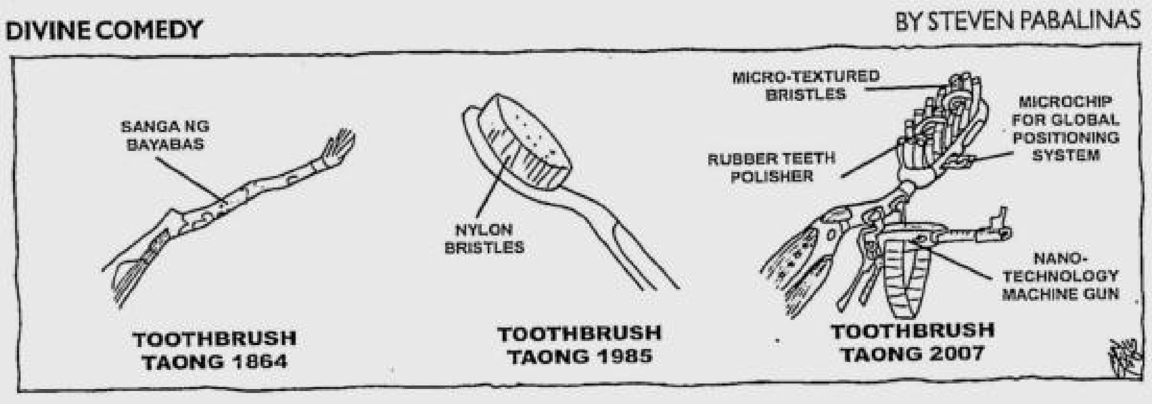
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


THIS IS THE SOUND OF ME IN A RUT
TUM, TEE, TUM. TEE, TUM, TEE, TUM, TEE, TUM.
WHAT'S THE POINT OF LIVING?!!
TUM, TEE, TUM. TEE, TUM, TEE, TUM. TEE, TUM.

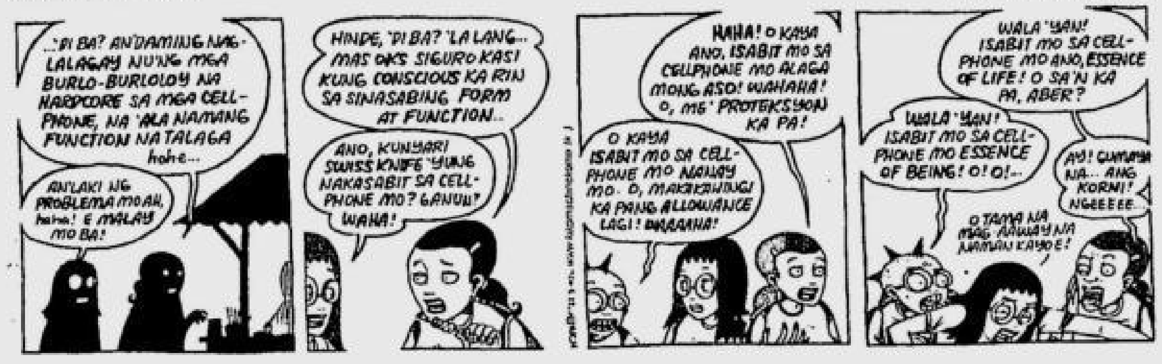
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


SANGA NG BAYABAS
TOOTHBRUSH TAONG 1864
NYLON BRISTLES
TOOTHBRUSH TAONG 1985
MICRO-TEXTURED BRISTLES
MICROCHIP FOR GLOBAL POSITIONING SYSTEM
RUBBER TEETH POLISHER
NANO-TECHNOLOGY MACHINE GUN
TOOTHBRUSH TAONG 2007

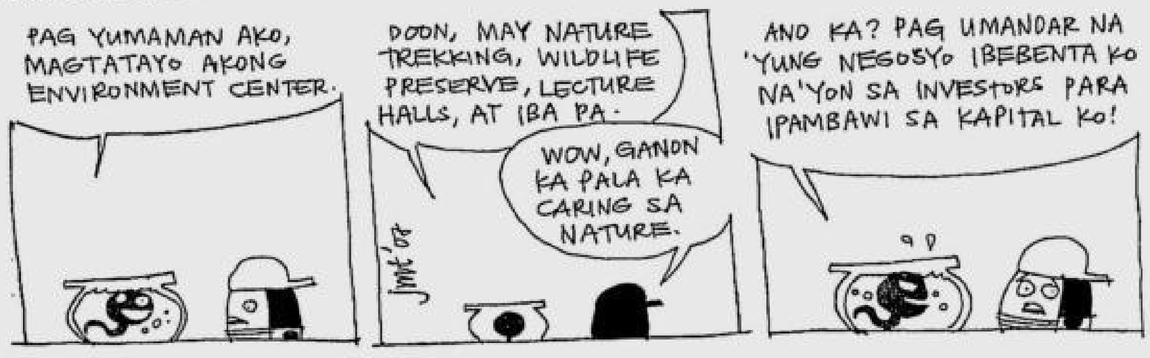
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


..'DI BA? AN'DAMING NAG-LALAGAY NUNG MGA BURLO-BURLOLOY NA HARDCORE SA MGA CELL-PHONE, NA 'ALA NAMANG FUNCTION NATALAGA hehe...
AN'LAKI NG PROBLEMA MO AH. haha! E MALAY MO BA!
HINDE, 'DI BA? 'LA LANG... MAS OKS SIGURO KASI KUNG CONSCIOUS KA RIN SA SINASABING FORM AT FUNCTION..
ANO, KUNYARI SWISS KNIFE 'YUNG NAKASABIT SA CELL-PHONE MO? GANUN? WAHA!
HAHA! O KAYA ANO, ISABIT MO SA CELLPHONE MO ALAGA MONG ASO! WAHAHA! O, MAY PROTEKSYON KA PA!
O KAYA ISABIT MO SA CELL-PHONE MO NANAY MO. O, MAKAKAHINGI KA PANG ALLOWANCE LAGI! BWAAHA!
WALA 'YAN! ISABIT MO SA CELL-PHONE MO ANO, ESSENCE OF LIFE! O SA'N KA PA, ABER?
WALA 'YAN! ISABIT MO SA CELL-PHONE MO ESSENCE OF BEING! O! O!..
AY! GUMAGA NA... ANG KORNI! NGEEEEE..
O TAMA NA MAG AAWAY NA NAMAN KAYO E!

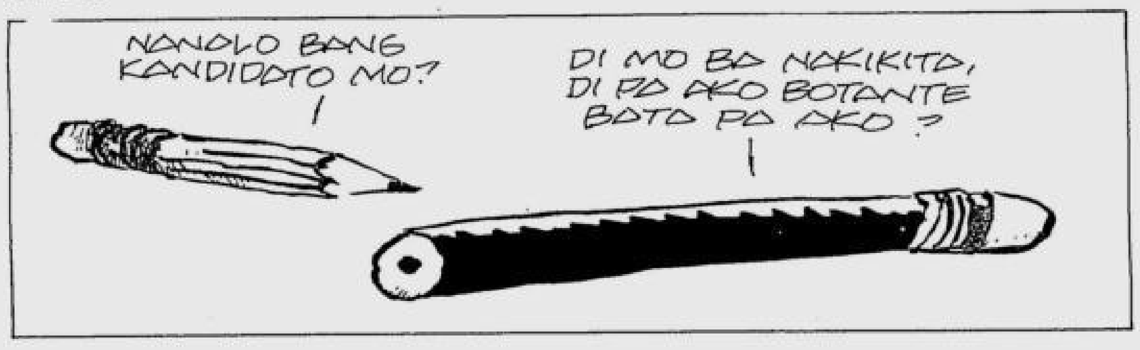
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


PAG YUMAMAN AKO, MAGTATAYO AKONG ENVIRONMENT CENTER.
DOON, MAY NATURE TREKKING, WILDLIFE PRESERVE, LECTURE HALLS, AT IBA PA.
WOW, GANON KA PALA KA CARING SA NATURE.
ANO KA? PAG UMANDAR NA 'YUNG NEGOSYO IBEBENTA KO NA 'YON SA INVESTORS PARA IPAMBAWI SA KAPITAL KO!

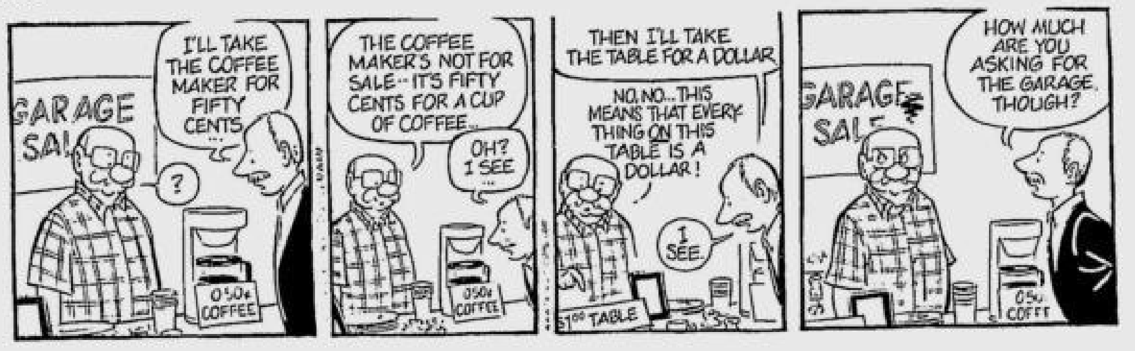
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

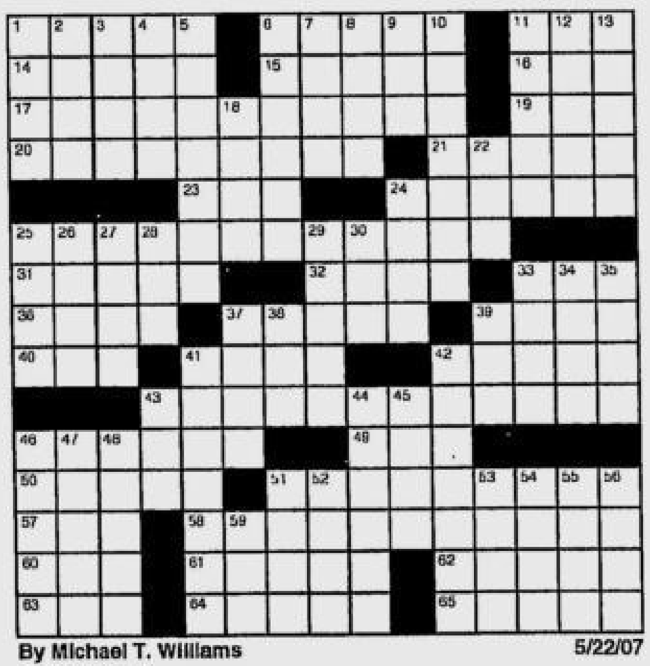

NANOLO BANG KANDIDATO MO?
DI MO BA NAKIKITA, DI PA AKO BOTANTE BOTO PA AKO?

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


GARAGE SALE
I'LL TAKE THE COFFEE MAKER FOR FIFTY CENTS
?
50¢ COFFEE
THE COFFEE MAKER'S NOT FOR SALE... IT'S FIFTY CENTS FOR A CUP OF COFFEE...
OH? I SEE...
THEN I'LL TAKE THE TABLE FOR A DOLLAR
NO, NO...THIS MEANS THAT EVERYTHING ON THIS TABLE IS A DOLLAR!
I SEE.
$1.00 TABLE
HOW MUCH ARE YOU ASKING FOR THE GARAGE, THOUGH?

DAILY CROSSWORD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By Michael T. Williams
Clearwater, FL

5/22/07

ACROSS

1 Dandruff source
6 Ready for the pitch
11 Ross or Bering
14 German gun
15 Ducks' kin
16 6-pointers
17 Low pressure situation?
19 Superlative suffix
20 Houdini and Henning
21 Range rover
23 Annapolis grad.
24 Danny of "Radio Days"
25 Narrow-minded thinking?
31 River of Rouen
32 Genesis spot
33 Rap-sheet letters
36 Fritz or k.d.
37 Long cuts
39 Bubble masses
40 Golfer Ernie
41 Hits the road
42 __ Domingo
43 Clear sailing?
46 Stylish businesses?
49 Actress Hagen
50 Sampled
51 Secret meetings
57 One in Toledo
58 Fair punch?
60 Noisy disturbance
61 Joust weapon
62 Singer Della
63 Affirmative answer
64 Church table
65 Watchband

DOWN

1 Close forcefully
2 Bay of Pigs island
3 Excited
4 Dolly of "Hello, Dolly!"
5 Come before
6 Overcome with shock
7 Young adult
8 Entreats
9 Tempe sch.
10 Emotional stress
11 Harden
12 Car bomb?
13 Elroy Jetson's dog
18 Pitchfork part
22 Singer Ritter
24 Vigoda and Lincoln
25 Isolated land
26 Actress Patricia
27 Commandment breakages
28 Gerund maker
29 Burglary
30 Bangor's summer hrs.
33 Top-drawer
34 "Kiss Me __"
35 Out of control
37 Boars' mates
38 Ex-QB Dawson
39 Remotely situated
41 Venetian transport
42 Climbers
43 John's last name?
44 Orion's occupation
45 Depict distinctly
46 Cram for finals
47 Putter Palmer
48 Serengeti cats
51 Little red one
52 Black-and-white whale
53 Assist a crook
54 Stray off course
55 Lohengrin's love
56 "One __ Beyond"
59 __ d'Isere

Monday's Puzzle Solved

T	E	E	T	H	■	S	K	Y	■	C	A	C	H	E
O	S	S	I	E	■	L	E	O	■	A	S	H	E	S
P	A	P	E	R	W	O	R	K	■	R	A	I	D	S
S	U	N	■	Z	A	G	R	E	B	■	■	L	G	E
■	■	■	P	O	G	S	■	■	I	R	A	D	E	S
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C	R	A	P	S	■	S	A	N	D	T	R	A	P	S
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C	L	E	R	G	Y	M	A	N	■	I	R	O	N	S
■	■	T	A	R	R	E	D	■	S	N	A	R	E	S
C	H	O	L	E	R	■	■	A	N	T	S	■	■	■
L	O	T	■	■	H	A	N	G	A	R	■	A	C	T
A	L	A	M	O	■	B	A	N	G	U	P	J	O	B
R	E	S	O	D	■	E	V	E	■	T	I	A	R	A
A	S	K	E	D	■	S	E	W	■	H	E	X	E	R

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5/22/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are capable of great things because you work hard with earnest persistence at whatever you pursue. Plus you have lots of energy. These qualities make you larger-than-life to others. Many of you experience joy through children. You have an exceptional memory. Something you've been involved with for the past nine years may fade from your life now. Time for something new!

Birthdate of: Paul Winfield, actor; Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, author; Ginnifer Goodwin, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Fasten your seat belts! The pace of your daily activities definitely is going to accelerate now. You've got places to go, things to do, people to see!

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You like money in the bank and mortgage-free land beneath your feet. During the next few weeks, money, finances and cash flow are your primary concerns.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Happy birthday! It's finally your turn to recharge your batteries for the rest of the year. Favorable circumstances and important people are attracted to you now.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): The next few weeks is a good time to lie low and seek some solitude. Work by yourself or behind the scenes if you can.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): What a popular month ahead! Everyone wants to see your face. Accept all invitations, and extend a few to others. Talk to people about your long-term goals for the future.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): The Sun is now at high noon, acting like a spotlight on you. Important people notice you now! Expect to be asked to take on increased responsibilities for something. Say yes.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You're restless and eager to get outta Dodge. You want some adventure! Travel if you can; if not, be a tourist in your own city. Learn something new.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): In the next few weeks, you'll be strongly passionate about everything. You also might be dealing with shared property, insurance matters, inheritances and the like.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): With the Sun directly opposite your sign now, you might feel others oppose you. Actually, this is a good time to observe how you relate to those who are closest to you.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Now you have the energy to get organized. Do whatever you can to make this happen. Give yourself the right tools to do a great job.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): It's party city for you! The arts, the theater, sports, vacations, plus love and romance are all beautifully favored for the next six weeks. Get out and boogie!

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Home, family and real estate matters are tops on your list for the next few weeks. Time spent with a parent might be significant.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

by Dave Green

	1	3			9	4		
	9		4				1	2
5								7
6							7	
			2		1			
	7							3
1								6
7	6				8		9	
		9	3			1	8	

Difficulty Level ★★

5/22

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

4	8	2	6	3	7	9	5	1
1	6	5	8	9	4	7	3	2
3	9	7	2	5	1	6	8	4
2	3	8	7	4	6	5	1	9
7	4	9	5	1	8	2	6	3
5	1	6	9	2	3	4	7	8
8	2	4	1	7	5	3	9	6
9	5	1	3	6	2	8	4	7
6	7	3	4	8	9	1	2	5

Difficulty Level ★

5/21

RICHARD DALOIA

Sam, Anne keep mum about romance

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

A CLOSE FRIEND OF SAM MILBY'S revealed to me that there's been an "MU" between the singer-actor and Anne Curtis for two months now. But neither would admit it to the media, lest it affect their team-up with other stars.

Hmm ..."MU" for mutual understanding or mutual undercover?

Winner

Seems Pauleen Luna has discovered life after Marvin Agustin. She's on Cloud 9 these days because of Valenzuela mayor Win Gatchalian. "We are getting to know each other better," she says. "He's a family friend."

Does that mean he'll easily win the approval of Pauleen's super strict parents (who were not too keen about her romance with Marvin because he has two kids)?

"My *lola* introduced us, so *mukhang malakas ang* backer *niya,* " she adds, laughing.

Will the dashing politico live up to his name and win Pauleen's elusive heart?

Readers' corner

•There is a Richard Daloia in myspace.com with his photos on it. Is this the same person that Ruffa (Sharmaine) Gutierrez [is said to have] married in Nevada, according to a reader's e-mail in your previous column?—bsamsonph@yahoo.com

(Reader e-mailed a link where we found photo at left.)

•Hi, Dolly Anne. What happened to Fashion TV Turkey? Ruffa said Yilmaz bought the rights for her so she could continue her show biz career even while in Turkey? I e-mailed the marketing director of Fashion TV in France, Jean Pierre Partouche (jean@ftv.com). According to him, Yilmaz is not connected with them.—trueroblesalmas@gmail.com

Since my true passion has always been ... anything French, I got curious myself. So I e-mailed Jean Pierre Partouche in Francais. Here's our e-mail exchange:

Bonjour Monsieur Partouche

Salut! Est-il vrai que Yilmaz Bektas *a achete les droits de* FTV Turquie? *Merci*! (Greetings! Is it true that Yilmaz Bektas bought the rights of FTV Turkey? Thanks.)

Dolly Anne

Salut Dolly!

Non ce n est pas vrai ill b a rien a voir avec nous

I'll avait les droits de 2005 *a* 2006 *maintenant c est* Demet Sabanci. *Merci*. (No, it's not true. He has nothing to do with us. He had the rights in '05-06. Now it's with Demet Sabanci. Thanks.)

Jean-Pierre
Marketing Director Fashion TV
10/12 Rue de L'Amirale Hamelin 75016
Paris, France

Too bad, marriage has gone out of fashion for Ruffa. Not even the glitz of an impending career in Fashion TV Turkey could have saved it.

Guess list

•Guess who this hunk is. The production staff of a movie wonders why he refuses to have his makeup done by the in-house artist. As one of them puts it, "OA *siya* about doing his own make-up, even the retouch!"

They're inclined to believe persistent rumors that he's gay. My source adds, laughing, "That's why *wala siyang tumatagal na* GF. *Kasi mas matagal pa siyang magpaganda*!"

Clue: The actor broke up with his GF recently.

•Guess who this TV host is. The marketing executive of a music gadget wanted to advertise in his show but was shocked at the exorbitant asking price.

"I've dealt with so many celebs regarding sponsorship. This is the first time I've heard of a host who gets paid for every product that is plugged in his show aside from the standard ad placement payment to the station," the exec laments. "To think the image that the show projects is that they help people. It seems this host is the one who really gains from it all."

Hmm ... I wonder if the network is in on this. Or is it just giving the TV host maximum tolerance?

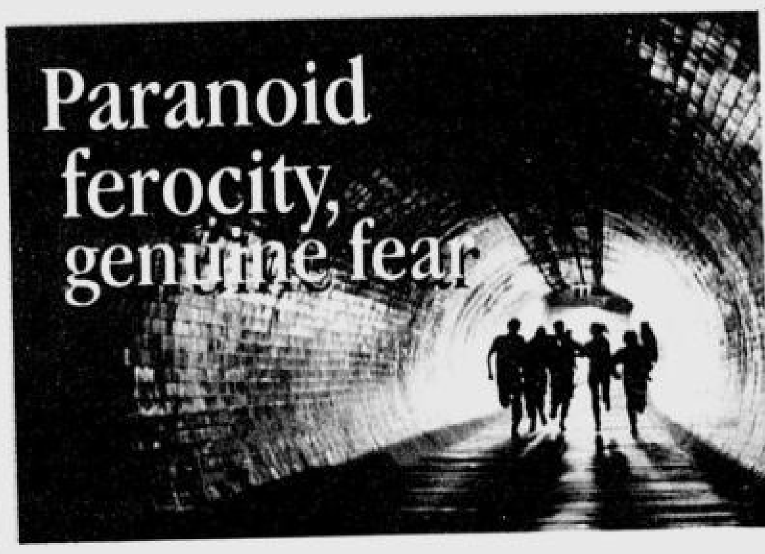
Clue: The host is separated from his first wife.

Movie soundtrack

Regine Velasquez and Piolo Pascual join forces in the soundtrack of their movie, "Paano Kita Iibigin" (Star and Viva Records). The title cut is composed by Regine's "honey" Ogie Alcasid. Also included are "Muling Magmamahal," "Pare Ko" (Regine's version of the Eraserheads classic and more.

Catch the songbird and the heartthrob in Market! Market! (May 25), Glorietta (May 26) and SM Sta. Rosa (May 27). Ogie's long overdue revelation about his romance with Regine is Piolo's cue to ask her, "Paano Kita Iibi-

SAM/ D4



Paranoid ferocity, genuine fear

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

REVIEW

LIKE MANY OF ITS FAN-FAVORITE, MULTI-parter monster movie ilk, "28 Weeks Later" succeeds in replicating the paranoid ferocity and breakneck pace of its celebrated predecessor. This blood-soaked sequel to the Danny Boyle-Alex Garland horror collaboration "28 Days Later" stands on its own while expanding on the previously established mythology. There's not a lot to digest anyway, and yes, it's another undead-infestation creep-fest, but it's still scary when it needs to be. Boyle and Garland have taken on executive producer duties for this project, so directing reins have been handed to Spanish director Juan Carlos Fresnadillo, who co-wrote the script with three others.

Those who've seen the first film would remember the savage attack by "Rage Virus"—infected humans, who swarm into a hidden refuge (again shown in the opening sequence. These creatures aren't the slow-walking zombies of decades past; these ultra-crazed ex-people run really fast and either kill or infect their prey. The en-Raged are relentless, mindless beings out for blood. Their menace translates effectively and with a more tangible urgency than other recent horror movie creatures.

Actually clever

It's actually clever that this sequel focuses on a family dynamic, which firmly tethers the story and provides the emotional hook. Months after the devastating plague that nearly made human life on the British Isles extinct, survivors believe that all virus-carriers have been eliminated. Two refugees, siblings Andy and Tammy (Mackintosh Muggleton and Imogen Poots) reunite with their father Don (Robert Carlyle), who narrowly escaped the attack of Rage-infected humans. He tells them that a pack has claimed the life of their mother Alice (Catherine McCormack). But not long after sneaking off their military-protected haven to retrieve keepsakes from their old home, the kids discover that their dad may have fibbed about their mother's fate.

> It has a few awkward flashback scenarios, and chase scenes that feel unoriginal

It's been hinted early on that these kids may hold the key to the survivors' salvation, so a young military doctor, Scarlet (Rose Byrne) looks after them when all hell breaks loose in the form of a new contagion.

The film has a few awkward flashback and dream scenarios, and some chase and attack scenes that feel unoriginal, but there are some noteworthy sequences that creatively make use of lighting tricks and special effects.

"28 Weeks Later" also has dozens of extras who deliver what's required of them, keeping the main actors on their toes. These components mesh exceptionally well to create an effective, permeating fear that mostly feels genuine.

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SHREK 3 2:30 / 4:40 / 6:50 / 9:00
ALIMALL 5
1 SHREK 3 2:30 / 4:20 / 6:10 / 8:00
2 FRACTURE 12:10 / 2:50 / 5:30 / 8:10
3 SPIDERMAN 3 12:30 / 3:10 / 5:50 / 8:30
4 CONDEMNED 1:00 / 3:20 / 5:40 / 8:00
5 WHISPER 1:20 / 3:40 / 6:00 / 8:20
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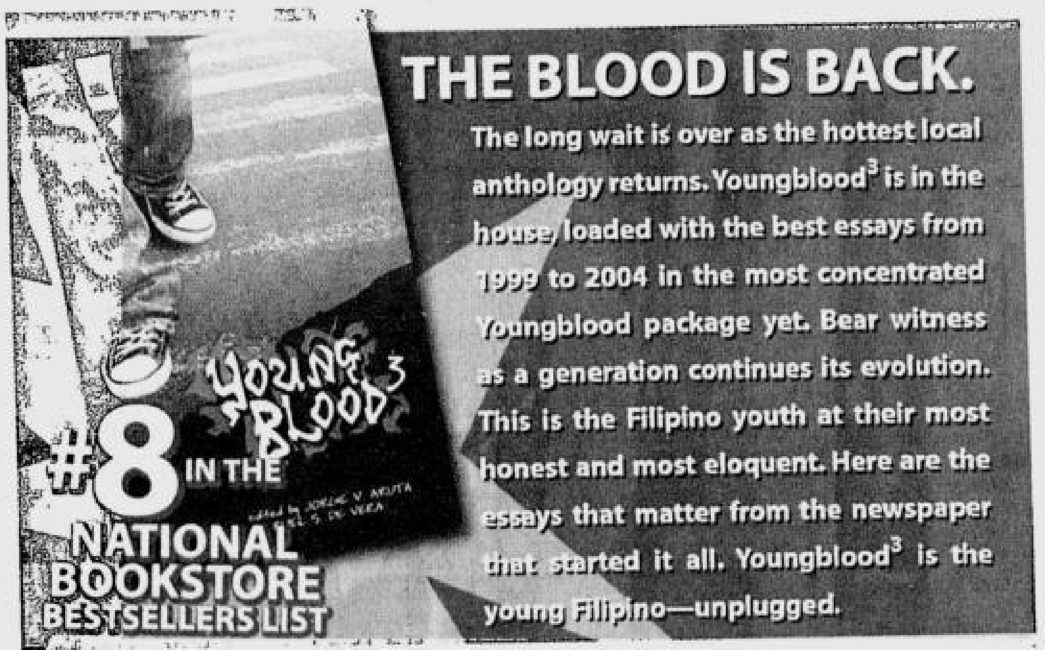

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